



JULY  
No. 73

# CRACK WESTERN

**52**  
BIG  
FULL  
WIDTH  
PAGES

10c

A REAL  
**COWBOY**  
ADVENTURE  
MAGAZINE  
FEATURING  
**ARIZONA  
RAINES**

also  
**BOB ALLEN**  
FRONTIER MARSHAL  
**THE WHIP**  
and  
**TWO-GUN  
LIL**

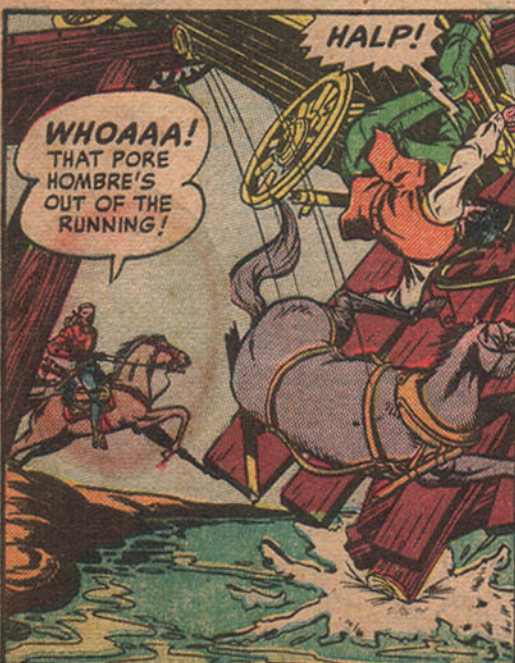
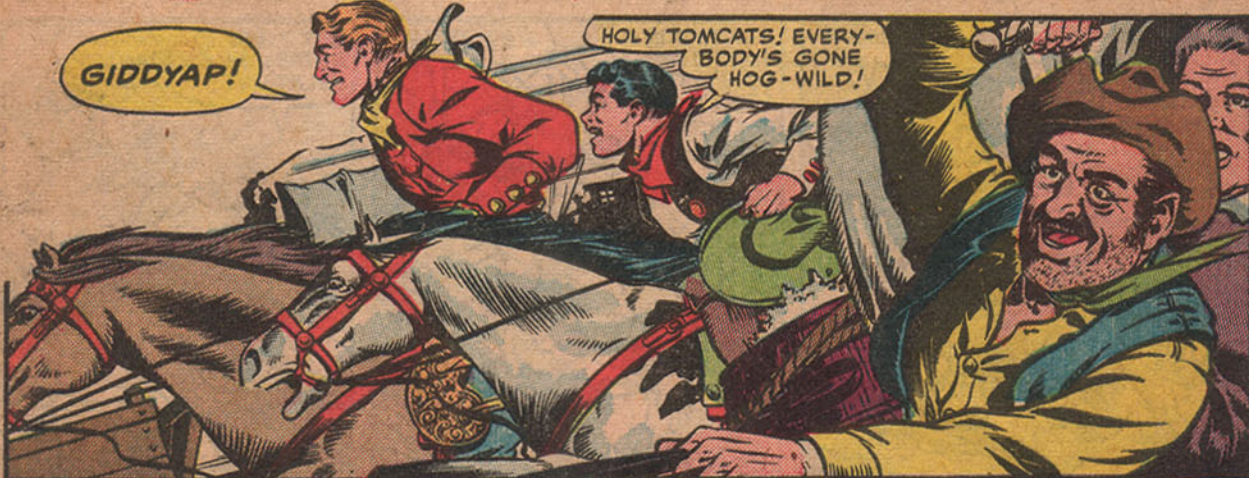
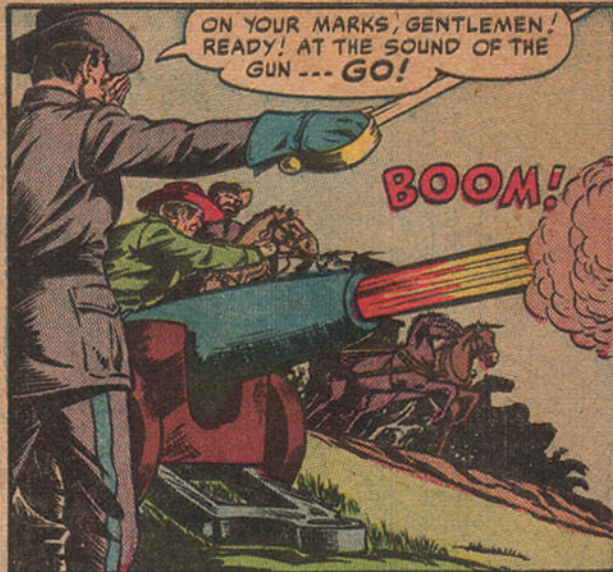
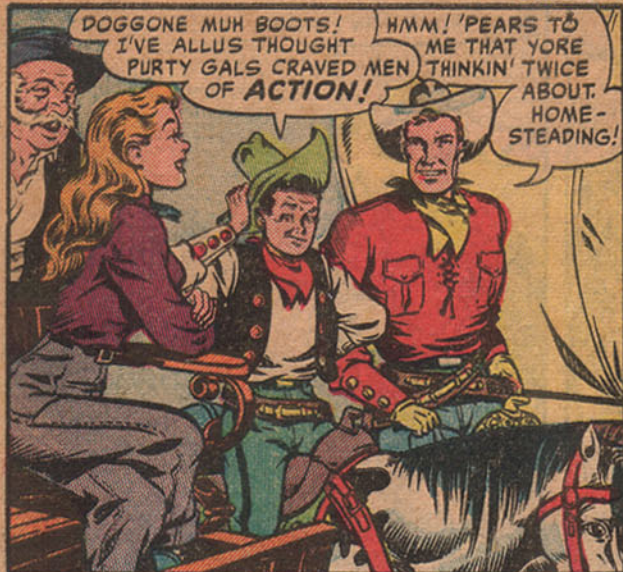






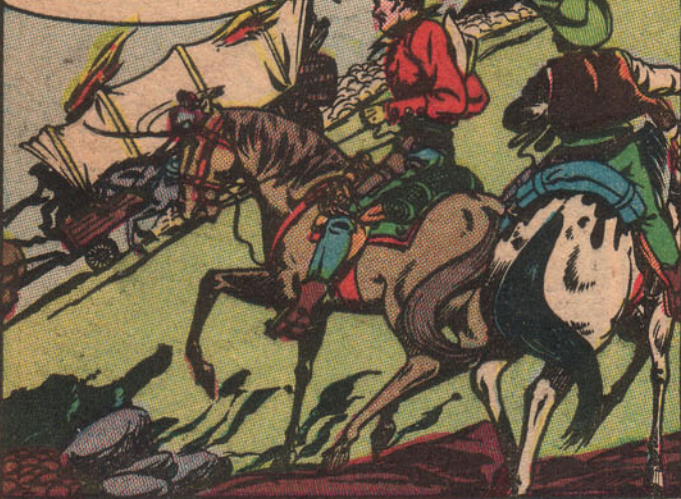
WEB COMIC  
UNIVERSE.COM







LEAPIN' COYOTES! HE'S  
SETTING FIRE TO THAT  
COVERED WAGON!



THIS SHORE DON'T MAKE SENSE! WHY WOULD  
ANYONE PUT A TORCH  
TO A HOMESTEADER'S  
WAGON?

GO GIT  
HIM,  
ARIZONA!



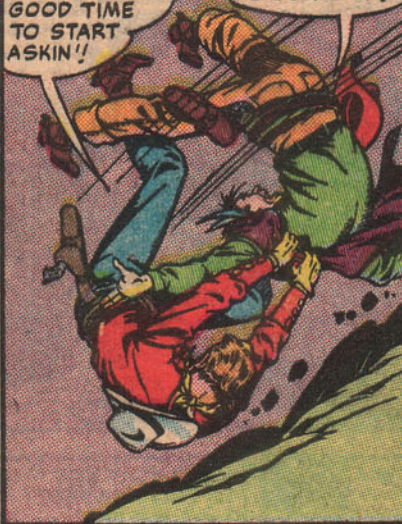
I'M BUSTIN' CLEAR OUTA MY  
SKIN WITH QUESTIONS I  
WANT TO ASK  
YOU!

EUHE



AND THIS IS A  
GOOD TIME  
TO START  
ASKIN'!

EEEEYOW!



BUT FIRST I'LL JEST  
ESTABLISH FRIENDLY  
RELATIONS!



FEEL LIKE TALKING? YOU KIN  
START BY TELLING ME WHY  
YOU SET FIRE TO THAT  
WAGON BACK YONDER!

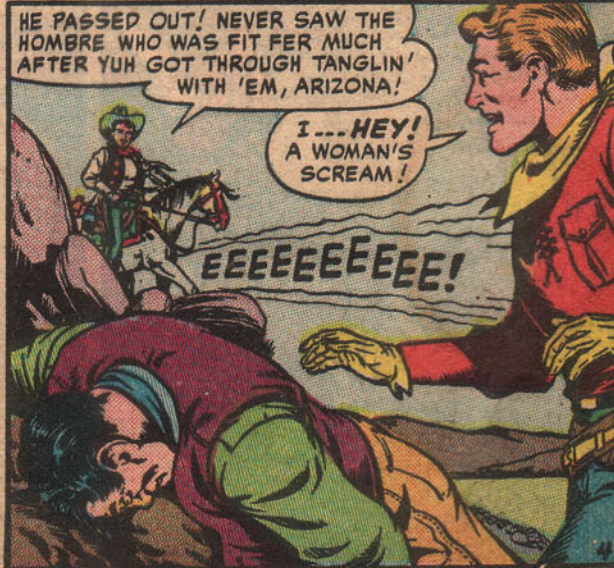
I---I---  
UHOOOHHH!



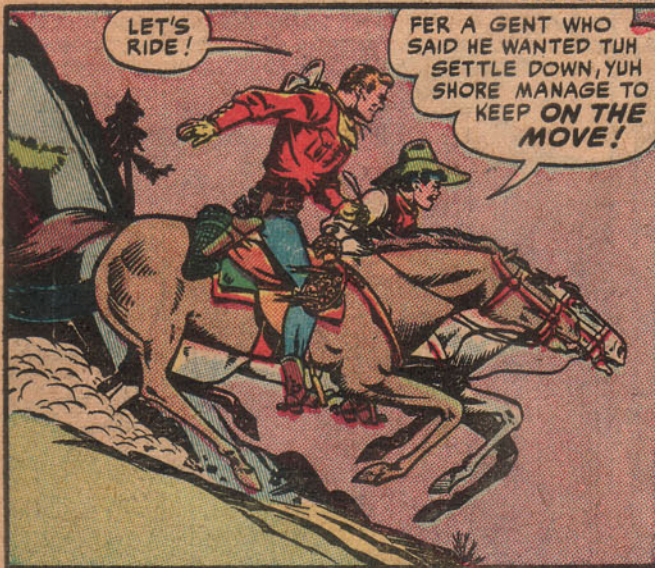
HE PASSED OUT! NEVER SAW THE  
HOMBRE WHO WAS FIT FER MUCH  
AFTER YUH GOT THROUGH TANGLIN'  
WITH 'EM, ARIZONA!

I---HEY!  
A WOMAN'S  
SCREAM!

EEEEEEEEEEEE!







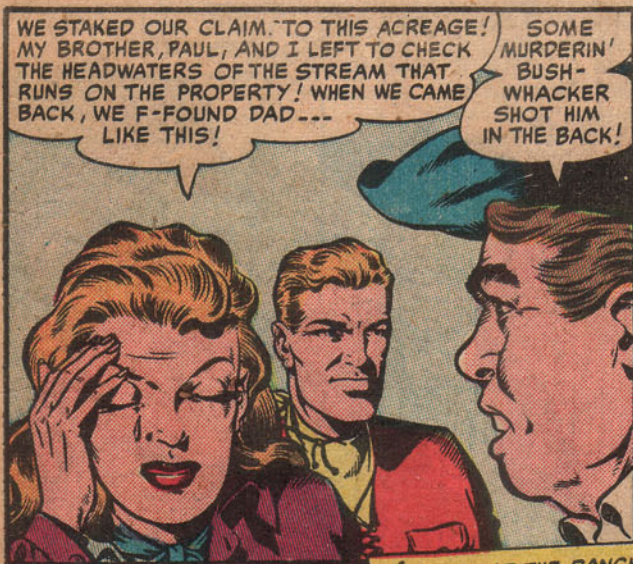
LET'S RIDE!

FER A GENT WHO SAID HE WANTED TUH SETTLE DOWN, YUH SHORE MANAGE TO KEEP ON THE MOVE!



WHY, IT'S THE GAL WE MET BACK AT THUH STARTIN' LINE!

WHAT'S HAPPENED HERE, MISS?



WE STAKED OUR CLAIM TO THIS ACREAGE! MY BROTHER, PAUL, AND I LEFT TO CHECK THE HEADWATERS OF THE STREAM THAT RUNS ON THE PROPERTY! WHEN WE CAME BACK, WE F-FOUND DAD--- LIKE THIS!

SOME MURDERIN' BUSH-WHACKER SHOT HIM IN THE BACK!



RECKON HE WAS SETTIN' UP HIS CLAIM WHEN HE WAS SHOT AND FELL ACROSS THE STAKE!

BEGINS TUH LOOK LIKE SOMEBODY'S OUT TUH KEEP THE HOMESTEADERS FROM FILIN' CLAIM TO THE DECENT PARCELS O' LAND!



AND IT COULD BE THAR'S THE NAME OF THE CRITTER WHO'S DOIN' IT!

I RECKON WE'D BETTER HAVE A LONG TALK WITH THIS HERE DOC FREEMAN!

LATER, AT THE RANCHHOUSE OF A CERTAIN JESS CARNADY---

YOU AND YORE BOYS DID A FINE JOB, DOC FREEMAN! FILED CLAIMS TO ALL THE LAND THAT OWNS ANY WATER RIGHTS! NOW, IF YOU'LL JEST SIGN THIS BILL OF SALE---

I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT OUR DEAL, CARNADY!



OWNING ALL THE ACREAGE NEAR STREAMS AND THEIR HEADWATERS WILL LET YUH FREEZE THE HOMESTEADERS OUT OF THE WHOLE TERRITORY! THEY CAN'T STAY AND FARM WITHOUT WATER!



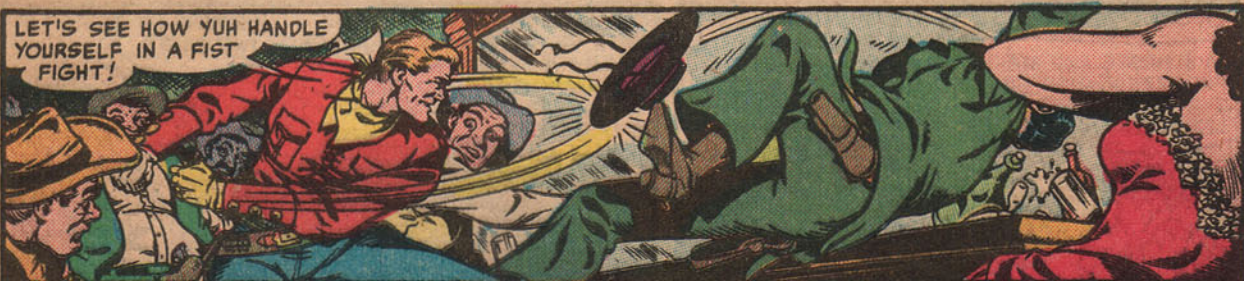




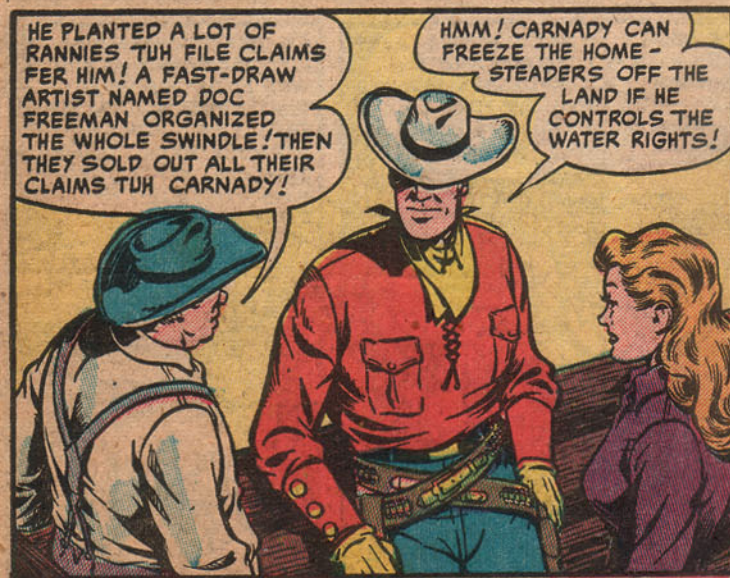
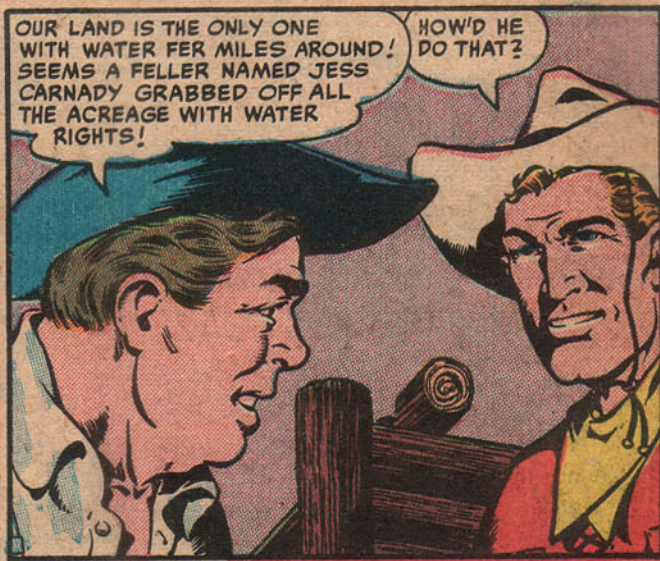
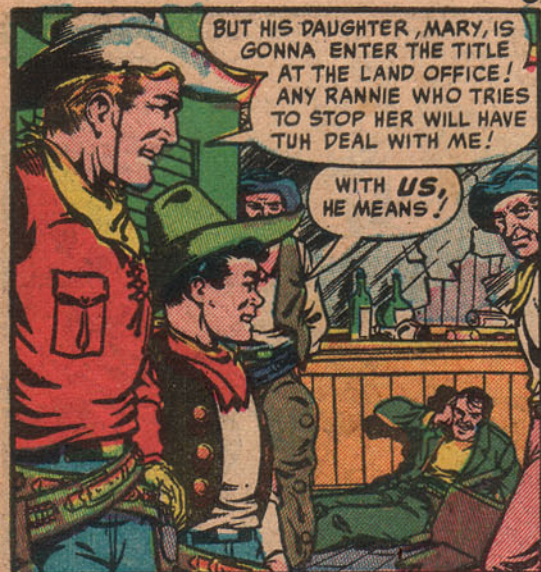
at THE LAST CHANCE SALOON...



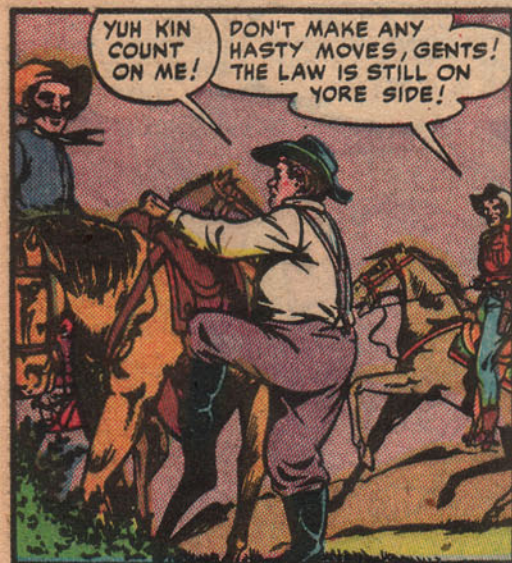
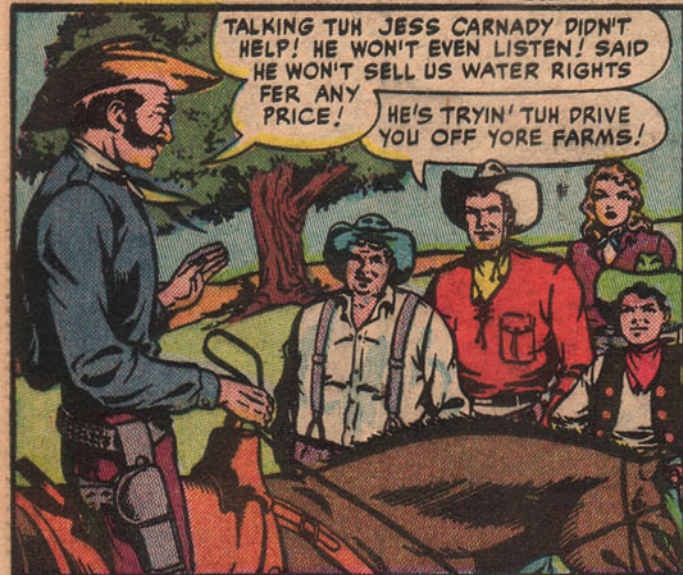












A GRIM CONCLAVE OF HOMESTEADERS MEETS AT THE LOCAL SCHOOLHOUSE ...





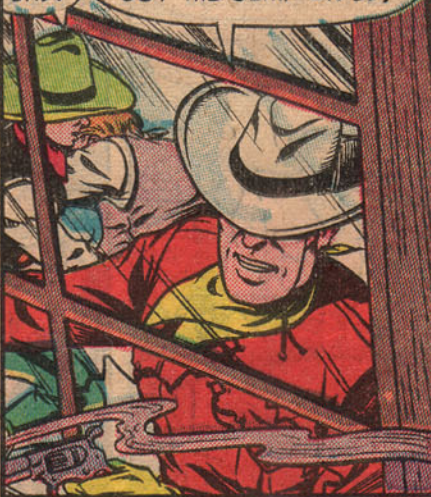
I'M IN FAVOR OF RAISING A CROWD OF VIGILANTES TUH DEAL OUT JUSTICE TUH CARNADY, DOC FREEMAN AND THEIR WHOLE...

UHHHH!



HE'S HURT BAD!

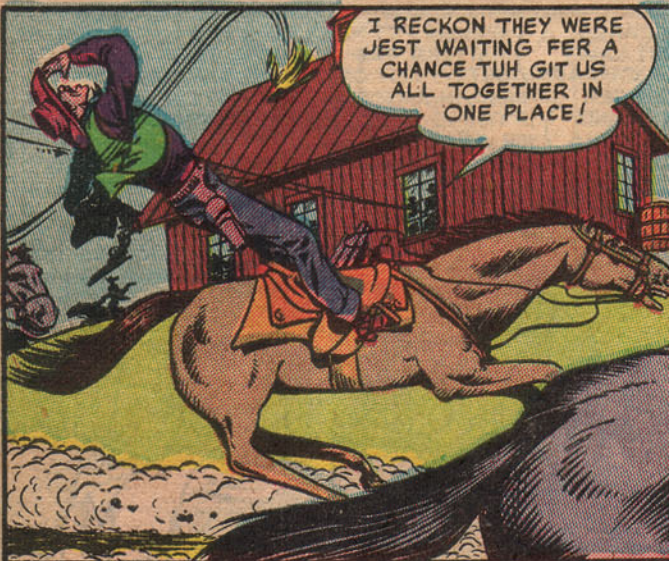
IT'S DOC FREEMAN AND HIS GUNNIES! 'PEARS CARNADY GOT THE JUMP ON US!



AIN'T NO USE DEBATIN' OUR RIGHTS NOW! CARNADY'S AIMIN' TUH WIPE US ALL OUT!

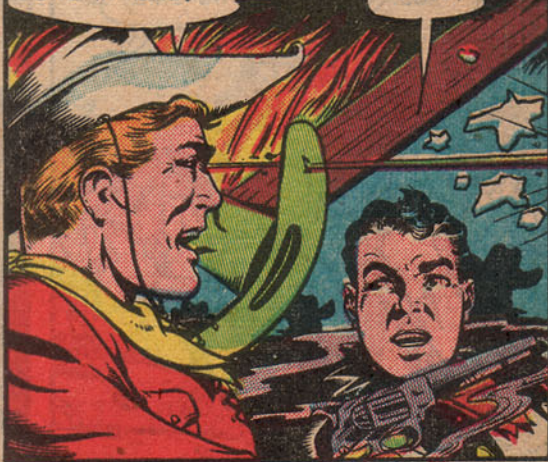


I RECKON THEY WERE JEST WAITING FER A CHANCE TUH GIT US ALL TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE!



THEY'VE GOT A GOOD FIRE STARTED! WE WON'T BE ABLE TUH HOLD OUT LONG IN HERE!

A LOT OF HOME-STEADERS AREN'T EVEN CARRYING GUNS!



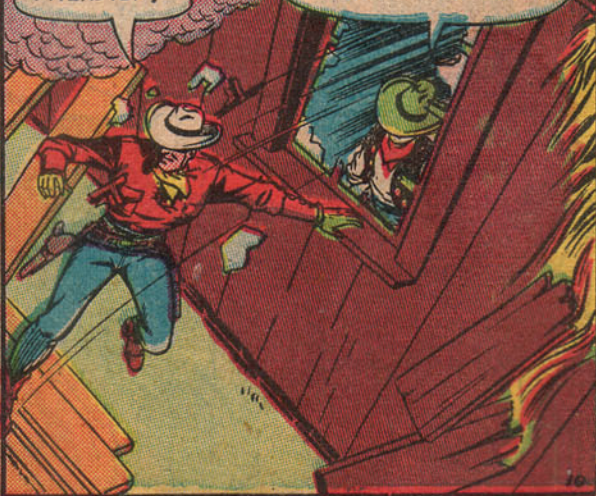
THEY'VE GOT US DEAD TO RIGHTS, ARIZONA!

IT SHORE LOOKS THAT WAY! IF WE STAY, WE BURN! AND IF WE PILE OUT THE DOOR, THEY'LL MASSACRE US!



I RECKON IT'S UP TUH ME TO CREATE A DIVERSION!

ARIZONA! IT'S PLUMB SUICIDE TUH GO OUT THAR IN THE OPEN!





# CRACK WESTERN

OH, TARNATION! ARIZONA WON'T LAST ANY LONGER THAN A SNOWFLAKE ON THE DESERT! C'MON, COVER HIM!

NOW WHAT'S HE UP TUH?

THEY'RE NOT WATCHING THE RIDERS! I KIN SNEAK UP BEHIND THEM ONE BY ONE!

UHHH

FOUR DOWN! THEY HAVEN'T SPOTTED ME YET!

EEEYOW!

BUT AT THIS MOMENT---

HEY! IT'S THE STRANGER AGAIN! HE'S BEEN KNOCKING OVER MY RANNIES!

I'LL PLANT LEAD BETWEEN HIS EYES! THAT'LL TEACH HIM TUH--- OWWW!

IT'S SPURS! HE AND THE HOMESTEADERS ARE ATTACKING --- IN THE NICK O'TIME!

YIPPEE! LET'S GIT 'EM!



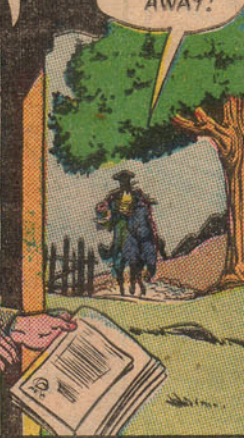
THEY'RE ROUNDIN' UP MY GUNNIES! NO USE STAYIN' TUH FIGHT A LOST CAUSE! I'D BETTER HIGHTAIL IT WHILE THAR'S STILL TIME!



WHAT HAPPENED, DOC? DID YUH FINISH OFF THEM PESKY HOME-STEADERS?



WE RAN INTUH A LITTLE AMBUSH! I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO GOT AWAY!



BUT I'LL TAKE THE MONEY YUH WERE GONNA PAY ME FOR THE JOB! I'LL NEED IT WHEN I RUNNIN' OUT ON ME! I WON'T GIVE YUH A RED CENT!



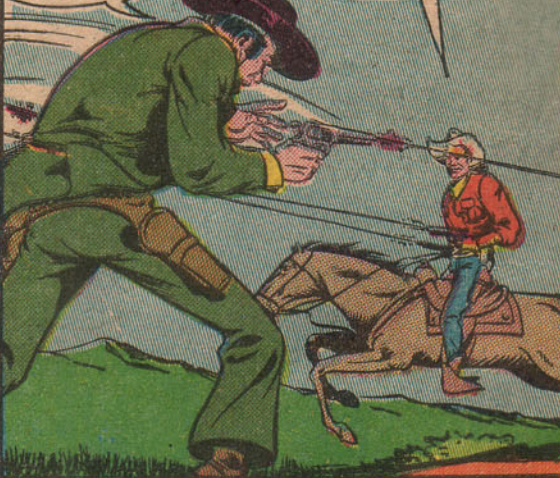
I AIN'T GOT TIME TUH PALAVER! I'LL JEST KILL YUH... AND TAKE THE MONEY, ANYWAY!

DROP THAT GUN!



IT'S YOU AGAIN! THIS TIME I'LL...

I GAVE YUH FAIR WARNING, DOC!



Y-YUH BEAT DOC FREEMAN TO THE DRAW! I DIDN'T BELIEVE THE HOMBRE LIVED WHO COULD DO THAT!

BETTER COME WITH ME, CARNADY! I'LL GIT YUH TO THE JAIL... AND YUH CAN HAVE A FAIR TRIAL! IF THE HOMESTEADERS REACH YOU FIRST, YORE NECK WILL BE STRETCHED ON A ROPE!



AND SO, LATER...

THE GOVERNMENT GAVE US THIS LAND! BUT YOU HELPED US DEFEND IT! I WISH YOU COULD STAY HERE TO HELP US BUILD UP WHAT WE'VE WON!

YOU'LL MANAGE! RECKON SPURS AND I JUST AREN'T MEANT TUH SETTLE DOWN! TROUBLE KNOWS OUR ADDRESS... AND IT'S BOUND TO CATCH UP... WHEREVER WE ARE!





**A GREAT ACTION  
MAGAZINE ALIVE  
WITH EXCITEMENT!**

**AS TIMELY  
AS TODAY'S  
HEADLINES!**

**FAST BECOMING THE  
MOST POPULAR COMIC  
MAGAZINE IN AMERICA!**

**ON SALE  
EVERY MONTH**

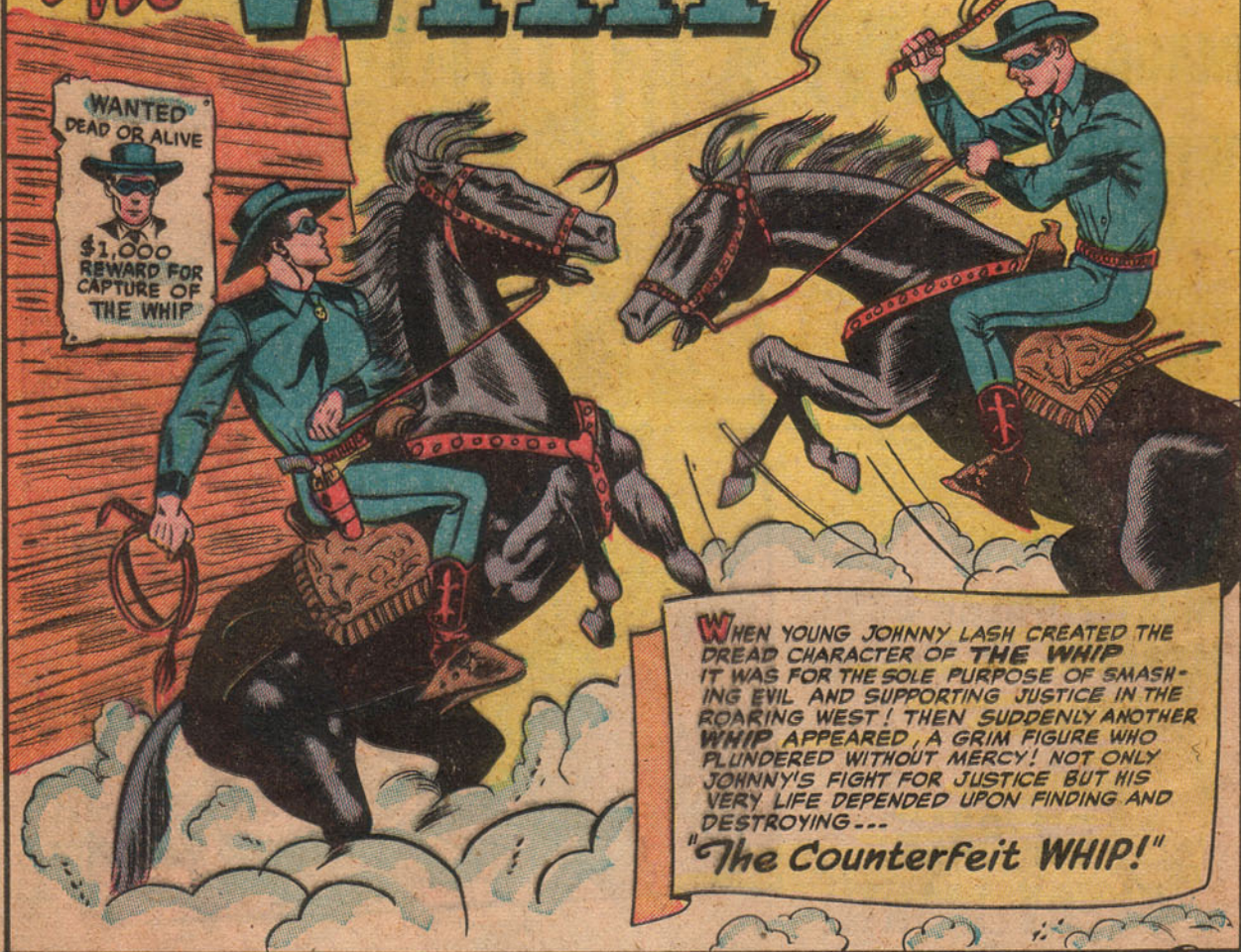


**52 PAGES OF THE MIGHTIEST ADVENTURES  
WITH THE GREATEST HEROES OF THEM ALL...**

*The*  
**BLACKHAWKS**



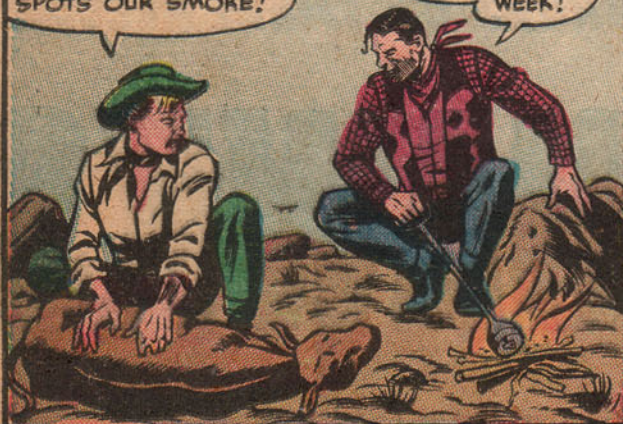
# The WHIP



IN A HIDDEN CANYON ON THE MONGALO RANGE...

THAT RUNNING IRON MUST BE HOT NOW, BEN! HURRY UP AND ALTER THE BRAND BEFORE SOMEBODY SPOTS OUR SMOKE!

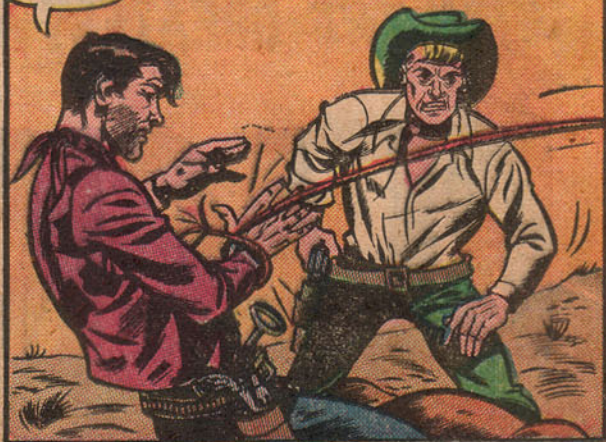
SURE, COLT! THIS'LL MAKE TWENTY PRIME STEERS WE'VE RUSTLED THIS WEEK!



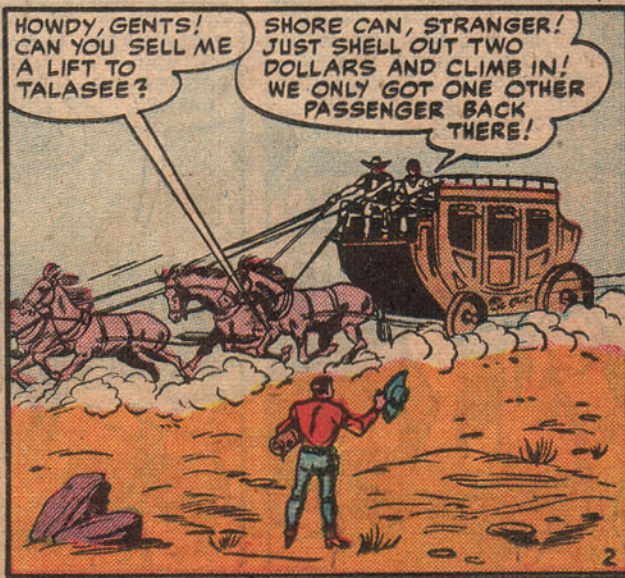
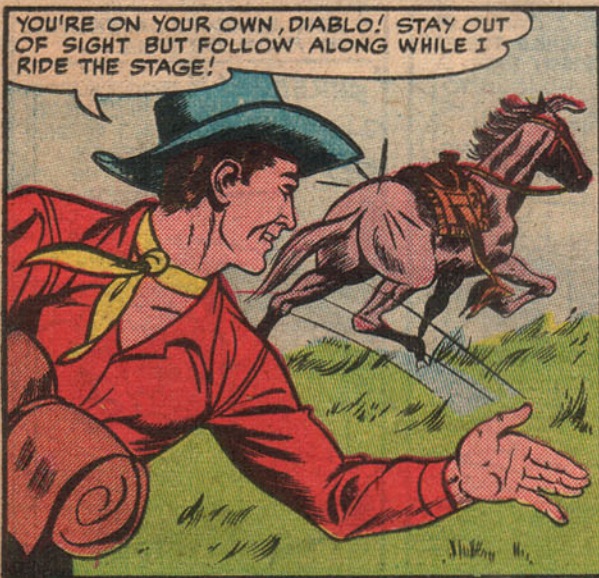
SUDDENLY---

THIS IS LIKE TAKIN' CANDY FROM A---  
**YIIII!**

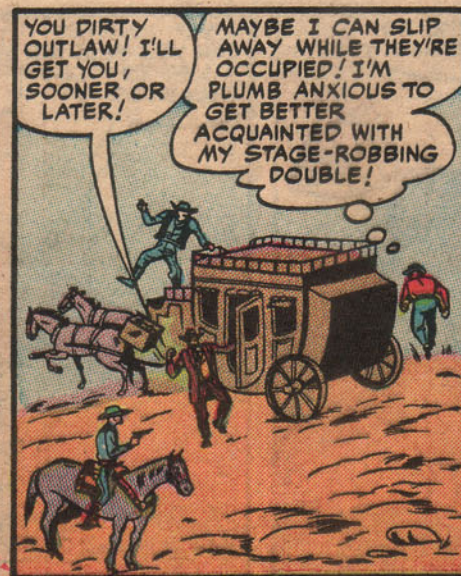
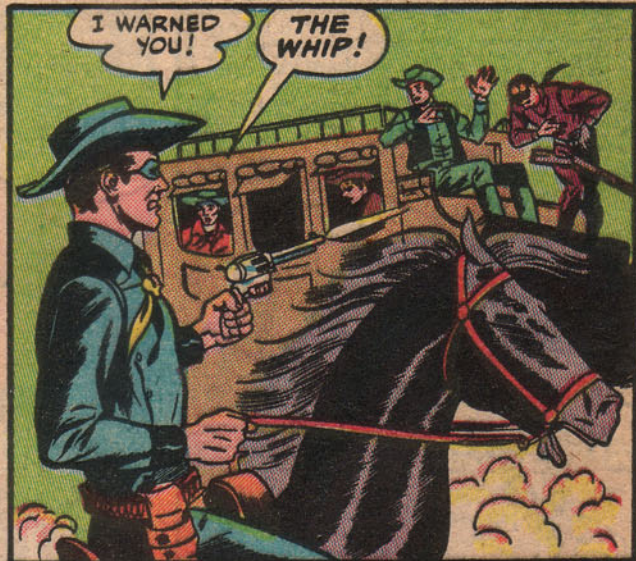
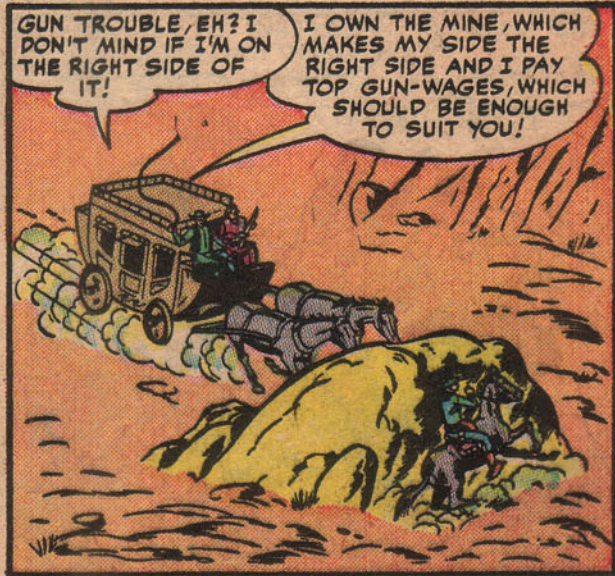
STAND STILL, YOU BUZZARDS! DON'T GO FOR THOSE GUNS, COLT!



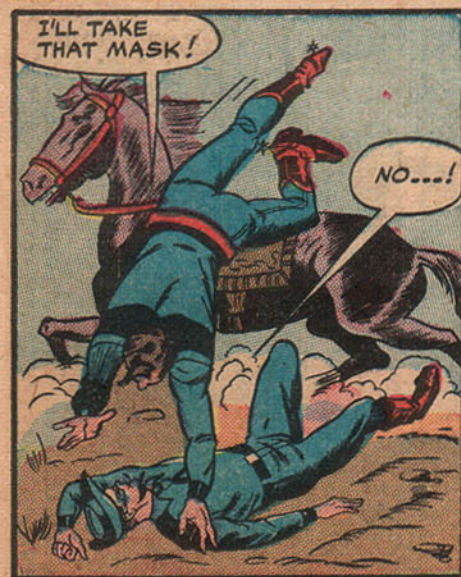
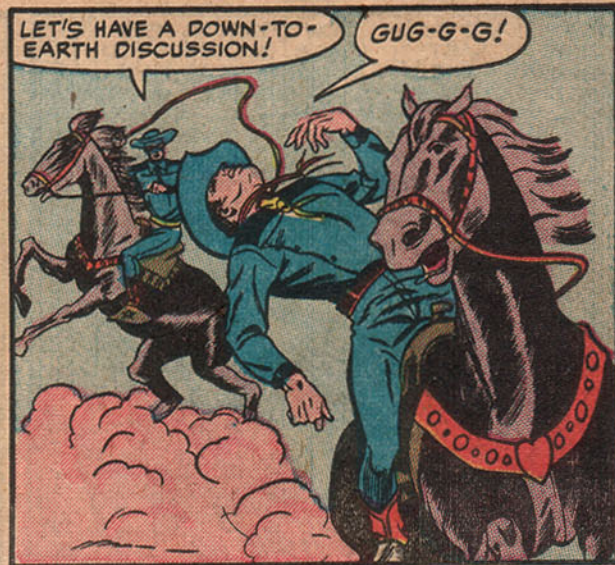
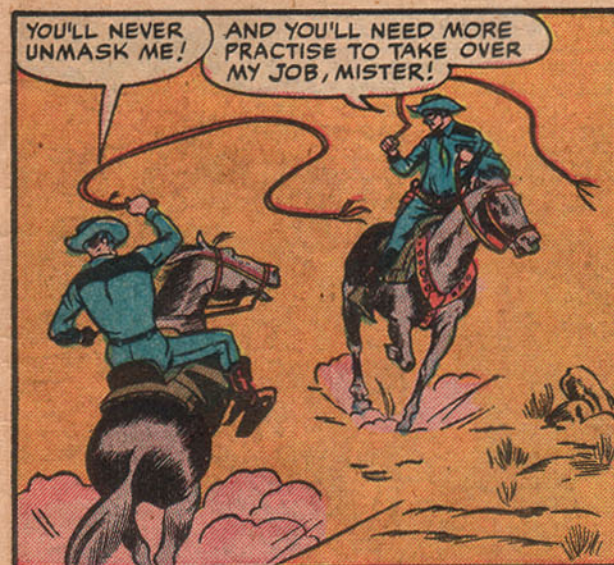
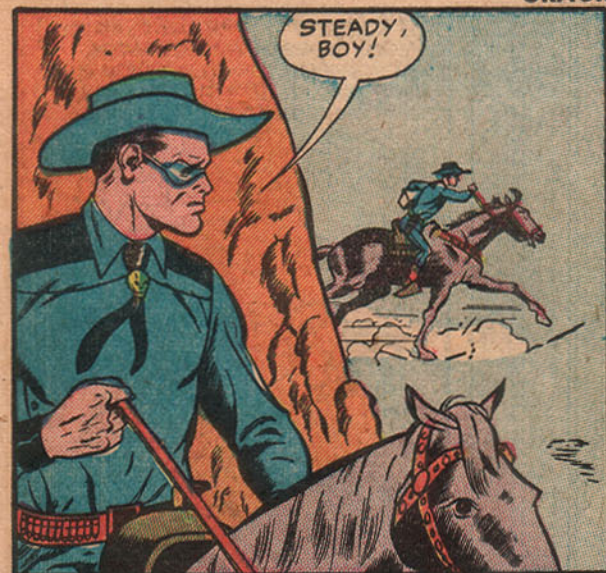




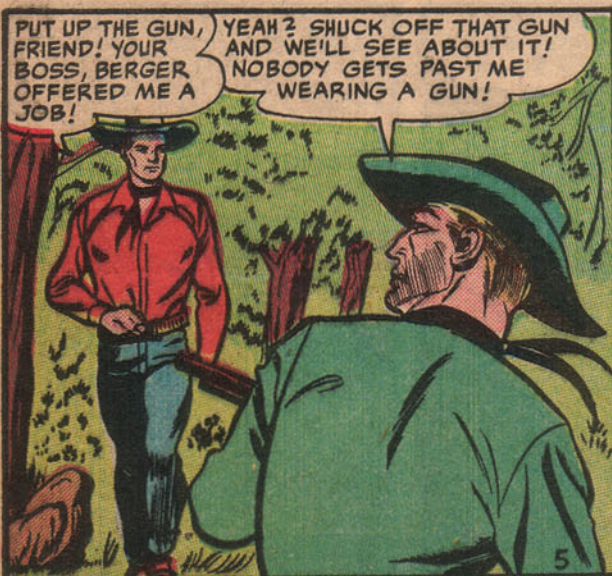
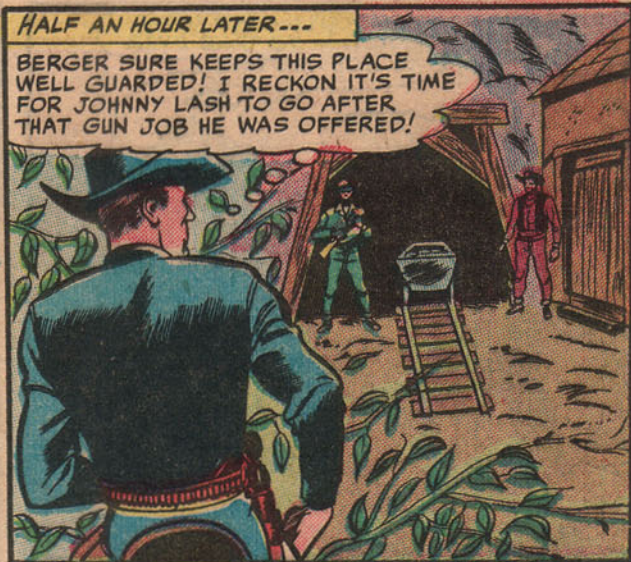
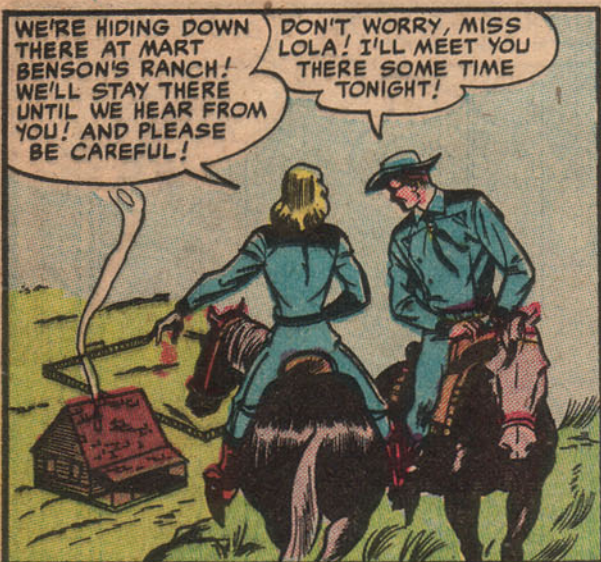
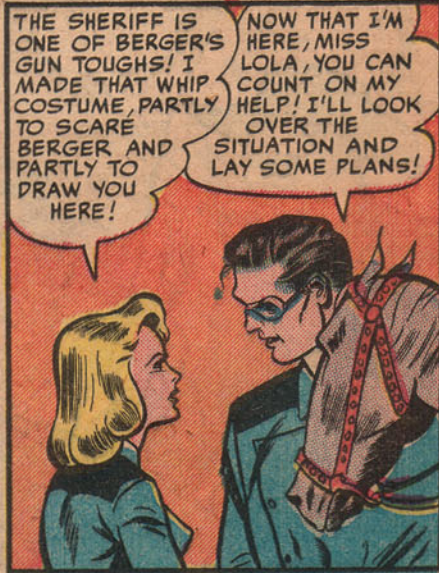
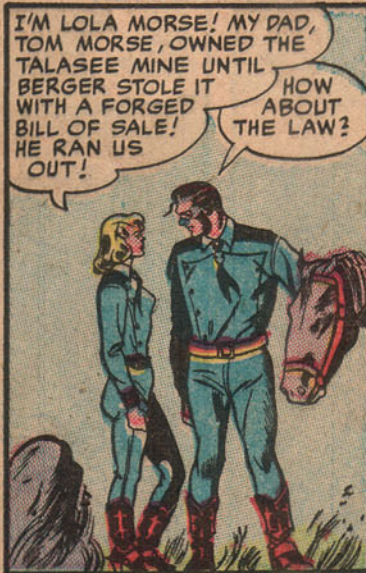




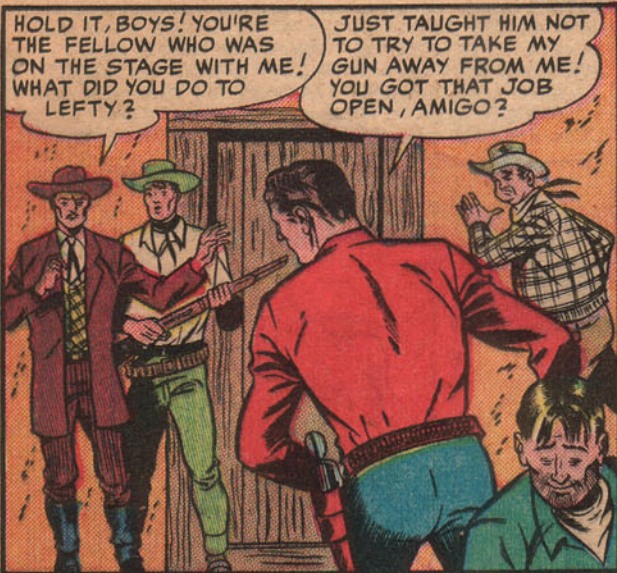












HOLD IT, BOYS! YOU'RE THE FELLOW WHO WAS ON THE STAGE WITH ME! WHAT DID YOU DO TO LEFTY?

JUST TAUGHT HIM NOT TO TRY TO TAKE MY GUN AWAY FROM ME! YOU GOT THAT JOB OPEN, AMIGO?



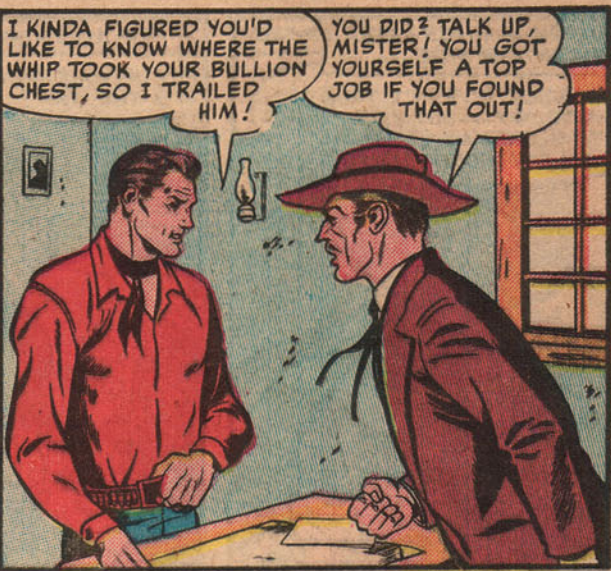
FOR ANYBODY WHO GETS THE JUMP ON LEFTY, I HAVE! COME ON IN AND WE'LL TALK!

YOU MEAN YOU THOUGHT THIS GENT WAS TOUGH? SOUNDS TO ME LIKE YOU GOT A NEED FOR A REAL MAN AROUND HERE!



WHERE DID YOU DISAPPEAR TO WHEN THE WHIP HELD US UP? IF YOU'RE SO TOUGH, WHY DIDN'T YOU TAKE HIM?

FOR FREE? I AIN'T TANGLIN' WITH THE WHIP UNTIL I'M ON SOMEBODY'S PAYROLL! BESIDES I HAD ME ANOTHER JOB TO DO!



I KINDA FIGURED YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW WHERE THE WHIP TOOK YOUR BULLION CHEST, SO I TRAILED HIM!

YOU DID? TALK UP, MISTER! YOU GOT YOURSELF A TOP JOB IF YOU FOUND THAT OUT!



HE HANDED IT OVER TO SOME GENTS ON MART BENSON'S RANCH! ONE OF 'EM WAS A HOMBRE NAMED MORSE!

THAT'S WHERE THEY'RE HIDING OUT! LASH, YOU'LL GET A REAL BONUS FOR THAT PIECE OF BUSINESS!



I'LL GET THE BOYS TOGETHER AND WE'LL WIPE OUT THE WHOLE CROWD TODAY! THAT'S ALL I'VE NEEDED----

DON'T BE IN A HURRY! I HEARD 'EM SAY THEY WERE HAVING A MEETING TONIGHT AT TEN! WHY NOT WAIT AND GET 'EM ALL AT ONCE?



THE WAY THEY TALKED, THEY'LL HAVE ALL THEIR FRIENDS THERE AND NO GUARDS OUT! THEY AIM TO DIVVY UP THE GOLD THEY STOLE!

YOU WIN, LASH! I WISH I'D HAD YOU INSTEAD OF THESE DUMB GUNHANDS LONG AGO! WE'LL STRIKE AT TEN TONIGHT AND WIPE THEM ALL OUT!



FROM WHAT I HEARD, YOU STOLE THIS MINE FROM MORSE! I HOPE YOU CAN MAKE IT STICK, IN CASE A U.S. MARSHAL STEPS IN!

DON'T WORRY! I'VE GOT A BILL OF SALE IN HERE AND IT LOOKS LIKE MORSE'S SIGNATURE! IF HE'S DEAD, HE CAN'T ARGUE ABOUT IT!



NOW WHERE ARE YOU GOING? I DON'T LIKE MY BOYS DRIFTING AROUND LOOSE WHEN WE GOT A JOB COMING UP!

I DRIFT WHERE I PLEASE, BERGER, AND I DON'T LIKE GENTS TO ARGUE ABOUT IT! I'LL SEE YOU BEFORE TEN TONIGHT!



A FEW MINUTES LATER, UP THE MOUNTAIN SIDE---

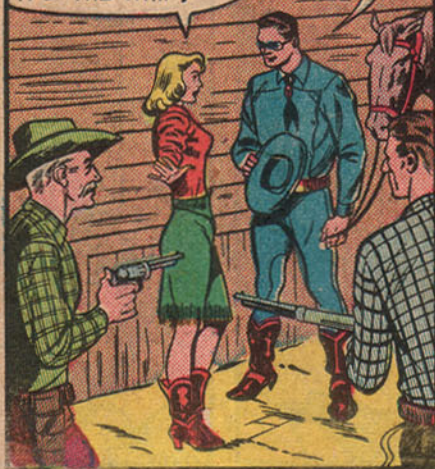
BERGER DOESN'T TRUST ANYBODY---BUT HE'S AFRAID TO BLOCK ME! LIKE ALL YELLOW COYOTES, HE'S EASY TO BLUFF!



A FEW MILES AWAY---

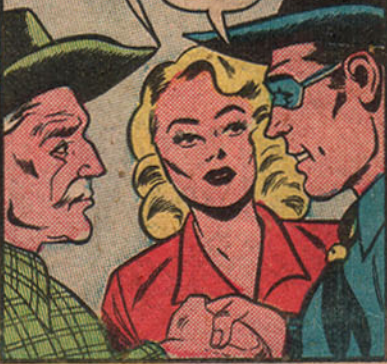
PUT UP YOUR GUNS! IT'S THE WHIP!

HOWDY, MISS LOLA!



WHIP, THIS IS MY DAD, TOM MORSE, AND MART BENTON!

HOWDY, GENTS! I CAME TO WARN YOU THAT BERGER AIMS TO CLOSE IN ON YOU HERE AT TEN TONIGHT AND WIPE YOU ALL OUT!



HERE? HOW DID HE FIND OUT WE WERE MEETING HERE? SOMEBODY MUST HAVE TIPPED HIM OFF!

A FRIEND OF MINE DID, MR. MORSE! I TOLD HIM TO PERSUADE BERGER TO BRING ALL HIS MEN HERE FOR A RAID!



WHILE BERGER AND HIS CREW ARE SURROUNDING AN EMPTY HOUSE, YOUR CROWD CAN SEIZE THE MINE! HE WON'T LEAVE MANY GUARDS THERE!

THE WHIP'S RIGHT! POSSESSION OF THE MINE IS NINE POINTS OF THE LAW! IF WE SEIZE IT, HE'LL HAVE TO GET IT BY OPEN WARFARE!

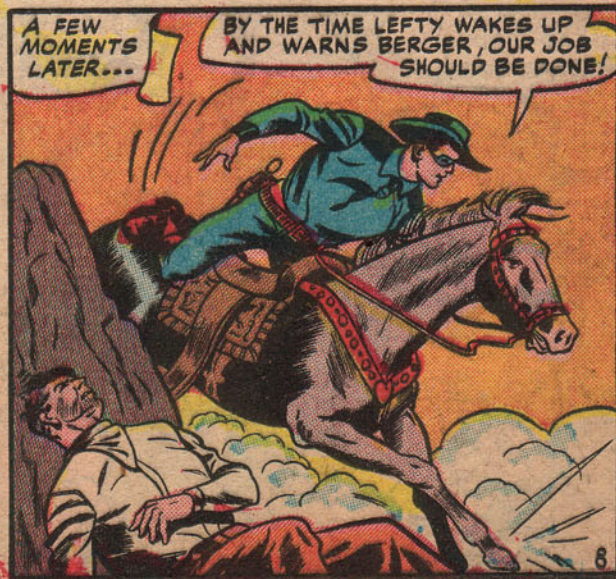
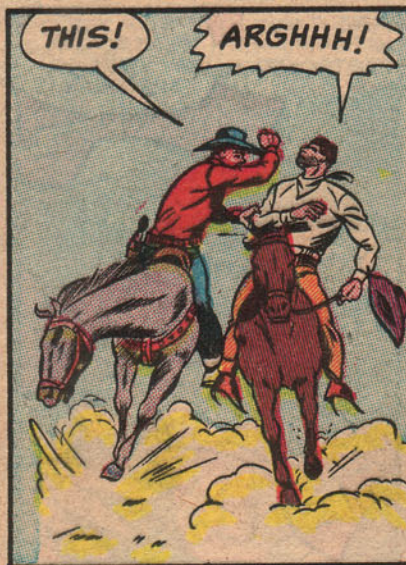
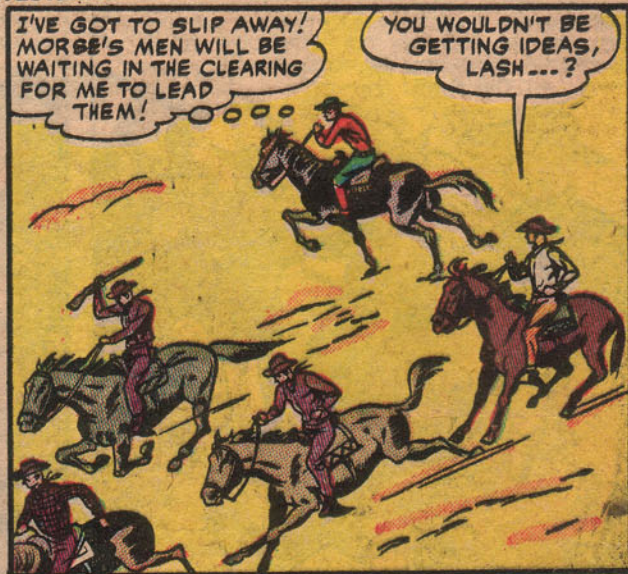


THAT FORGED BILL OF SALE IS IN BERGER'S SAFE! ONCE YOU HOLD THAT, AND THE MINE HEAD, THE ADVANTAGE IS WITH YOU!

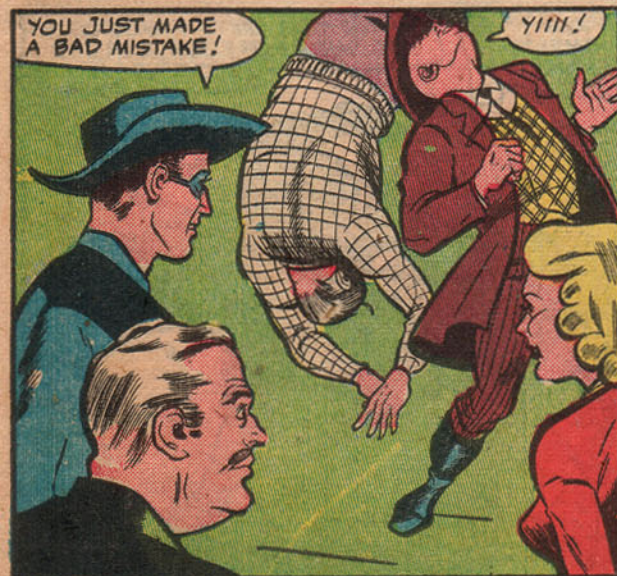
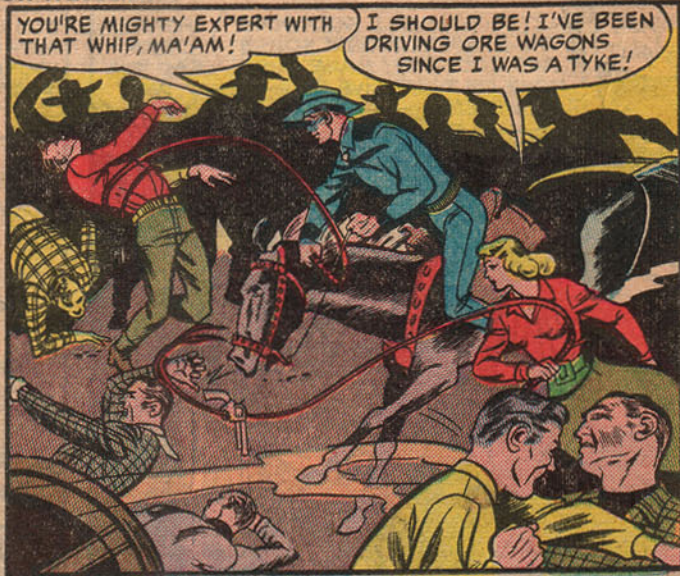
WE'LL MEET YOU IN THE CLEARING ABOVE THE MINE AT TEN, WHIP!





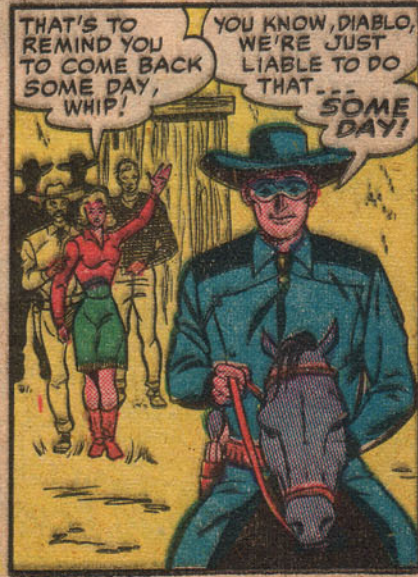
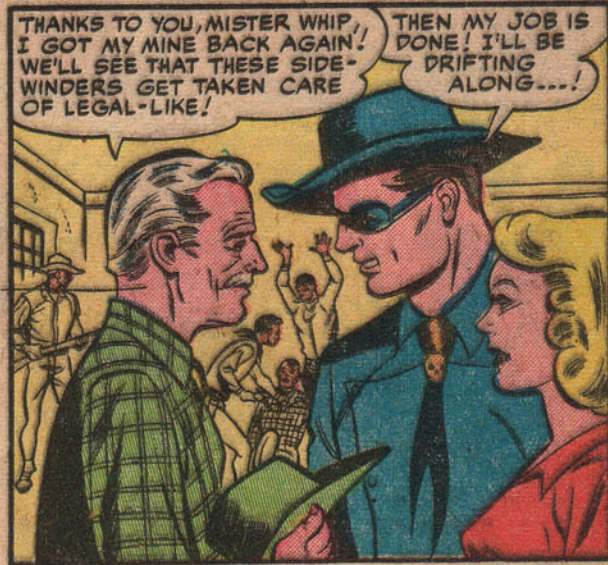
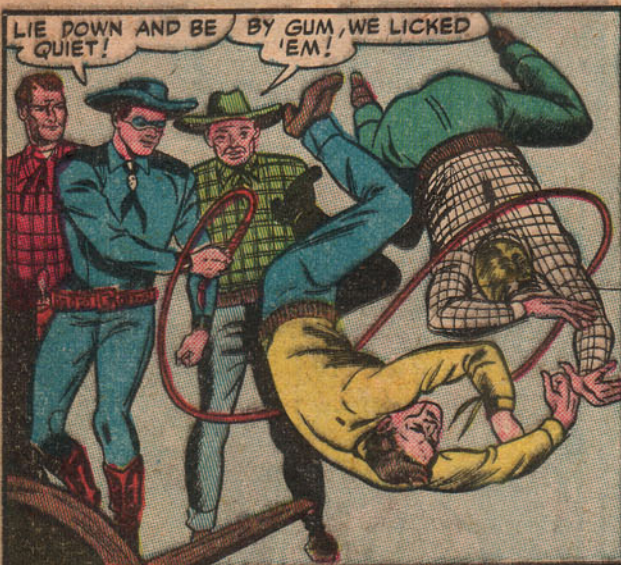








# CRACK WESTERN





# TWO-GUN LIL

SHERIFF MIKE PETERS TRIES TO SERVE A WARRANT ON ONE OF THE WILD SHELTON BROTHERS!



I WARN YUH,  
BAT SHELTON...  
AHHHH!

NICE  
SHOOTIN',  
BAT!

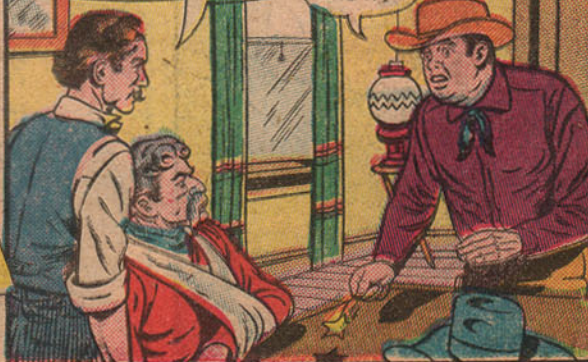
THAT TAKES  
CARE OF THE LAW  
AROUND HERE!

YEP! RECKON ALL WE GOTTA  
DO NOW IS TAKE OVER THE  
TOWN AND START RUNNIN' IT  
OUR WAY!



DOC SAYS I'LL BE LAID  
UP A MONTH, ED! LOOKS  
LIKE IT UP TO YOU, AS MY  
DEPUTY, TO ARREST THEM  
SHELTON BUZZARDS!

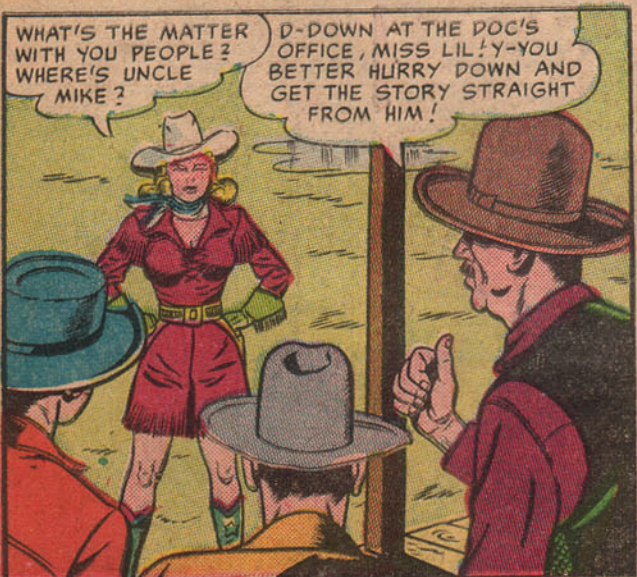
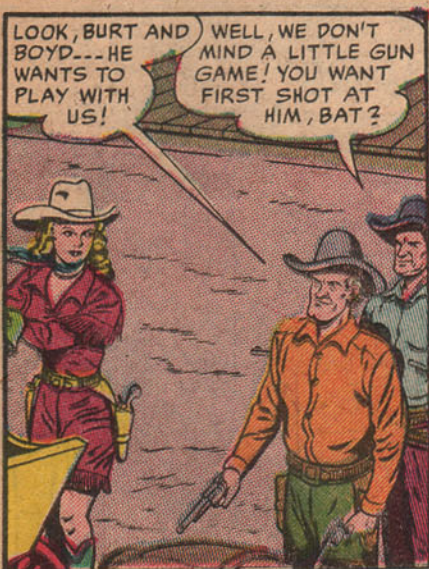
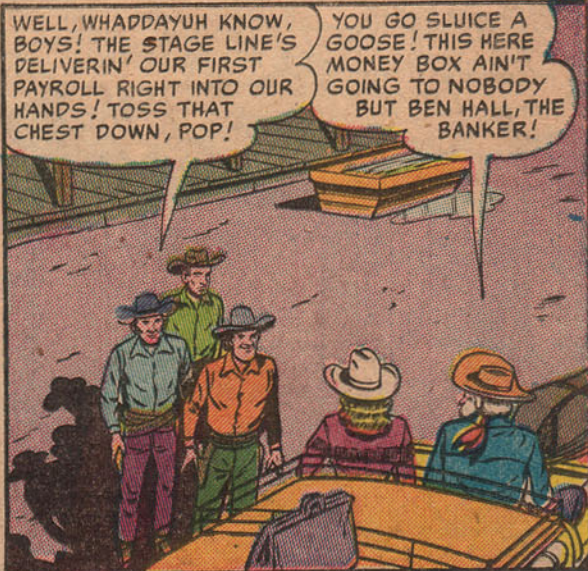
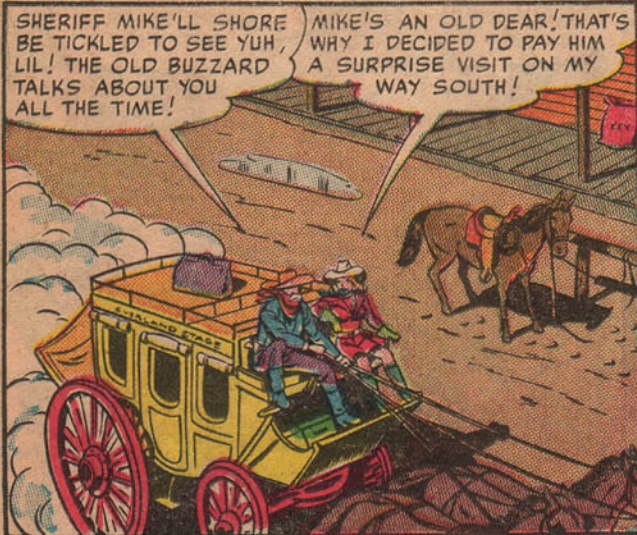
OH, NO! IF THEY KIN  
OUTDRAW YOU, I  
WOULDN'T HAVE A  
CHANCE! I'M RESIGN-  
ING, HERE AND  
NOW!



NO MAN ALIVE CAN MATCH LIL PETERS  
BLAZING SIX-GUNS! BUT WHEN A PAIR OF  
SAVAGE KILLERS CATCH LIL WITH HER  
GUNS EMPTY, HER ONLY HOPE OF  
SURVIVAL IS TO WAIT FOR A PAIR OF...  
"Six-Guns From The Sky!"



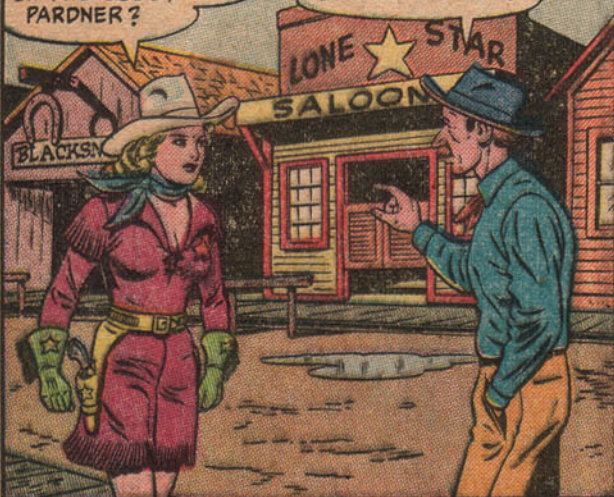
A SHORT TIME LATER, ON THE INCOMING STAGE---





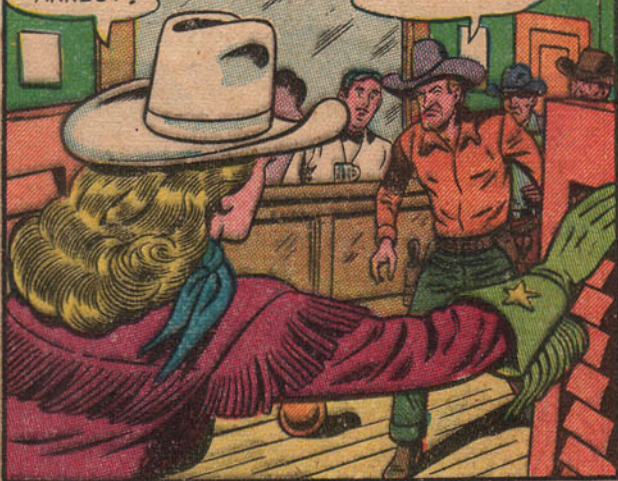
WHERE ARE THOSE POLECATS THAT WALK ON TWO LEGS, FARDNER?

R-RIGHT OVER THERE IN THE L-LONE STAR, MISS LIL! BUT BE KEERFUL!



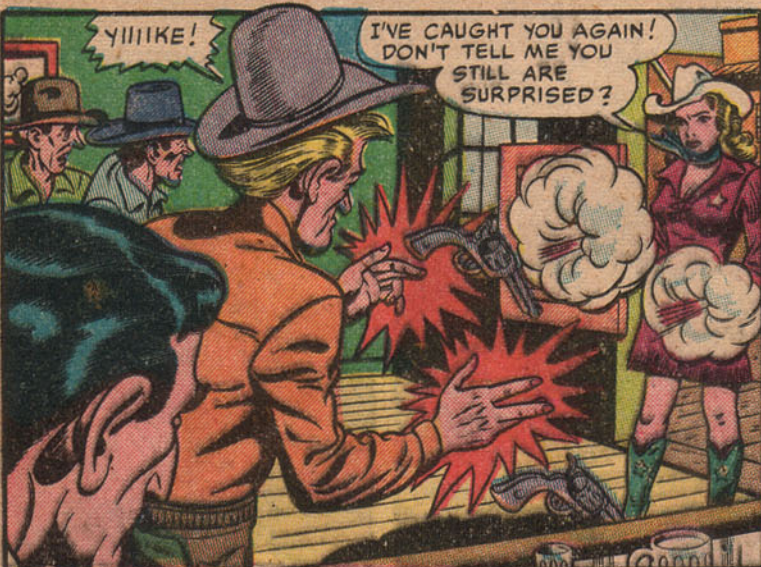
THERE YOU ARE! BAT SHELDON, YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!

TRY AND TAKE ME! LAST TIME YOU CAUGHT ME BY SURPRISE---



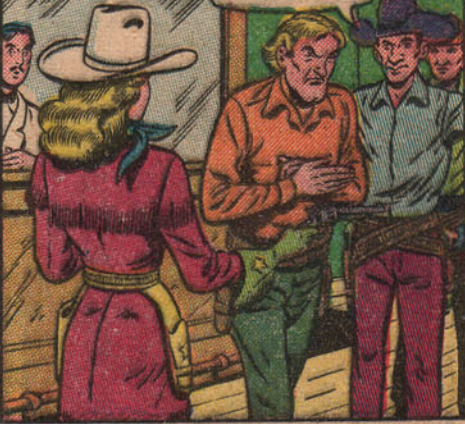
YIIIIKE!

I'VE CAUGHT YOU AGAIN! DON'T TELL ME YOU STILL ARE SURPRISED?



START MARCHING TO JAIL! YOU, TOO, YOU BUZZARD'S BROTHERS!

NOW HOLD ON, LADY! WE AIN'T DONE NOTHING! THERE AIN'T NO LAW ABOUT BEING BROTHERS, IS THERE?



I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT! YOU'RE IN THE CLEAR SO FAR, BUT I'M KEEPING AN EYE ON YOU! DON'T TRY ANYTHING FUNNY!

DON'T WORRY! WHEN WE TRY SUMP'N, IT WON'T BE FUNNY... FOR YOU!



WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO, BERT? WE GOTTA GUN THAT SMART GAL OUT AND GET BAT FREE AGAIN!

OH, SURE! WHO'S GONNA MATCH GUNS WITH HER? NOT ME, BOYD! SHE OUTDREW BAT AND HE'S FASTER THAN EITHER OF US!



I GOT AN IDEA! IF WE COULD FIGURE SOME WAY TO CATCH THAT FAST-SHOOTING CYCLONE WITH HER GUNS EMPTY...

AND I KNOW HOW TO DO IT! NOW LISTEN CLOSE, AND DON'T MISS ON THIS!

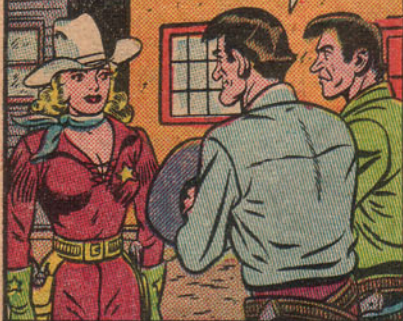




A SHORT TIME LATER...

YEAH? WHAT DO YOU TWO APE'S UNCLES WANT?

MA'AM, WE SURE DO ADMIRE YOUR GUN-SPEED! BUT WE BEEN THIN'KIN', WE BET YOU AIN'T AS FAST AS MY BROTHER BERT, HERE!



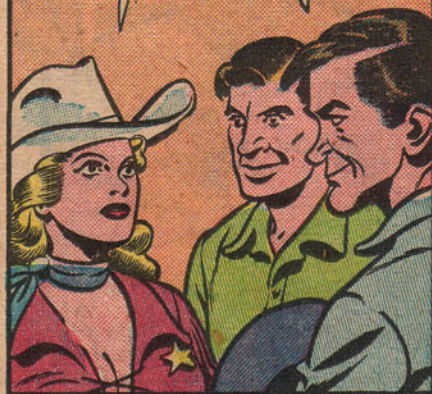
OH, NO, MA'AM! NOT LIKE THAT! WE JEST FIGGERED A MEBBE A KIND OF CONTEST, LIKE, TO SEE WHICH OF US IS FASTER!

SURE! BOYD MEANS, HOW ABOUT A SHOOTING MATCH WITH SIX-GUNS, YOU AGAINST BOYD, WITH SOME KIND OF TARGETS!



HMM! ALL RIGHT, BOYS! I'M BUSY RIGHT NOW BUT SUPPOSE I MEET YOU OUT AT THE HANGING COTTONWOOD IN TWO HOURS?

PERFECT! WE'LL BE THERE IN TWO HOURS!



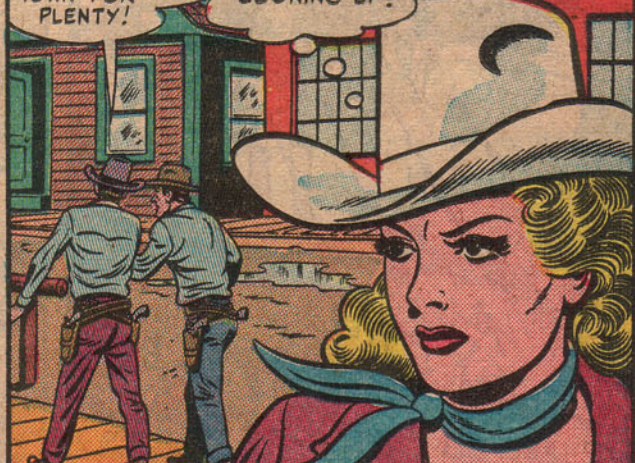
IT WORKED! WE GOT THAT SMART SISTER RIGHT WHERE WE WANT HER, BERT!

WE SURE HAVE, BOYD! WE'LL TRICK HER INTO SHOOTING UNTIL HER GUNS ARE EMPTY! THEN WE'LL GUN HER OUT AND TAKE OVER THE TOWN!

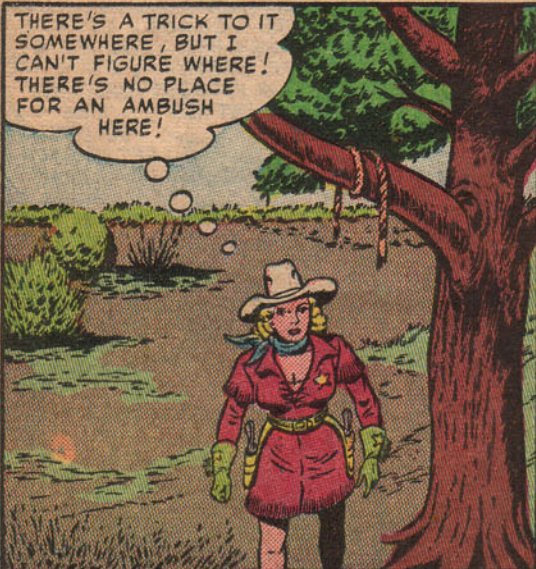


WE'LL BUST BAT OUTA JAIL AND REALLY TAKE THIS TOWN FOR PLENTY!

NOW, WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE THOSE YELLOW-BACKED SIDEWINDERS ARE COOKING UP?

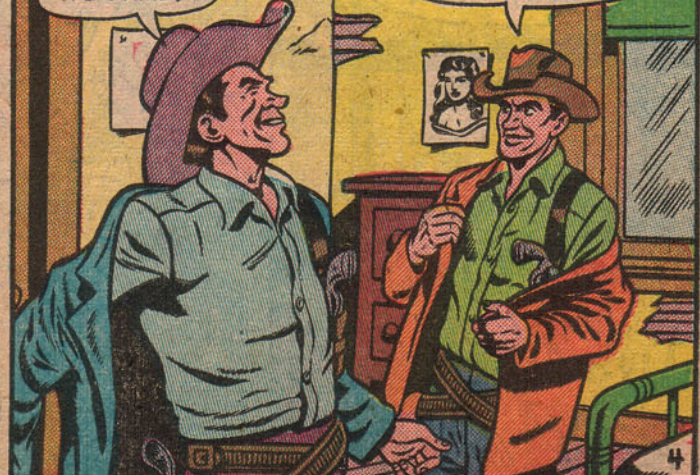


THERE'S A TRICK TO IT SOMEWHERE, BUT I CAN'T FIGURE WHERE! THERE'S NO PLACE FOR AN AMBUSH HERE!

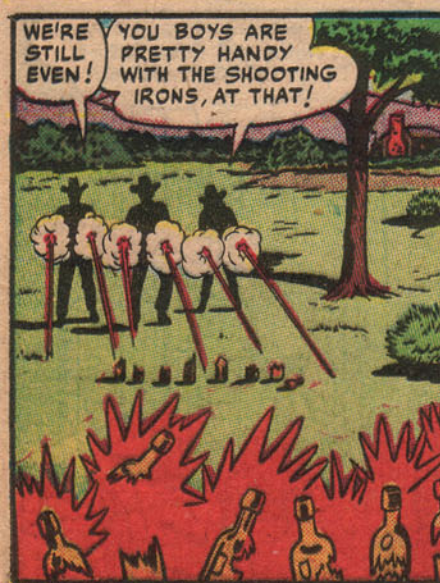
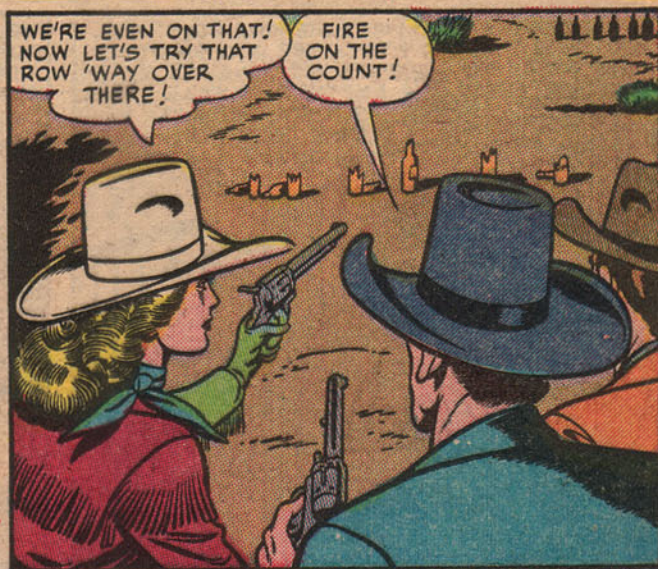
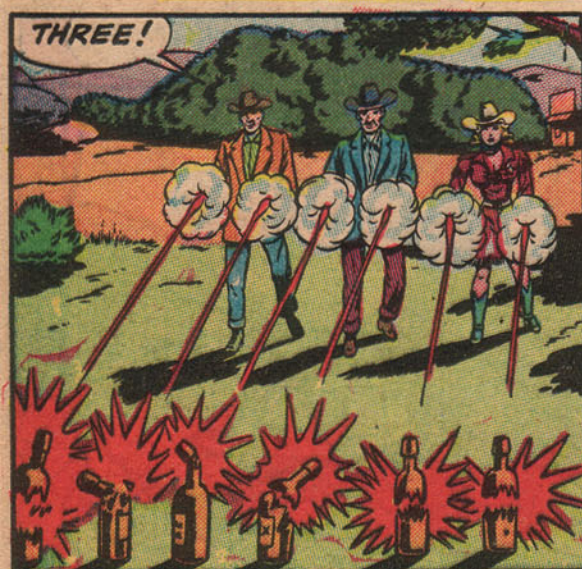
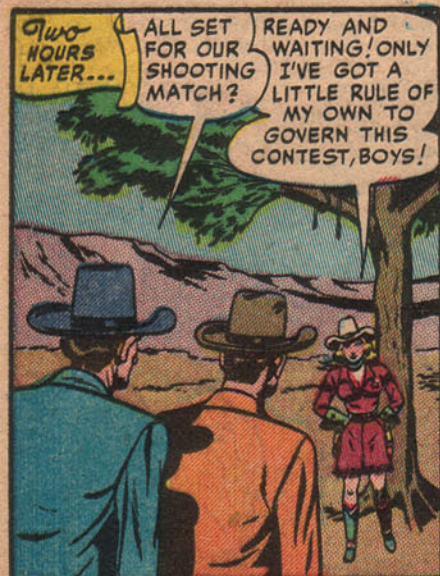


THIS IS PERFECT! SHE'LL SHOOT ALL HER BULLETS AND FIGURE WE DONE THE SAME!

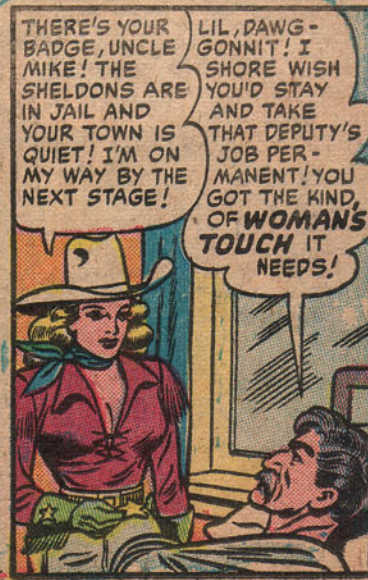
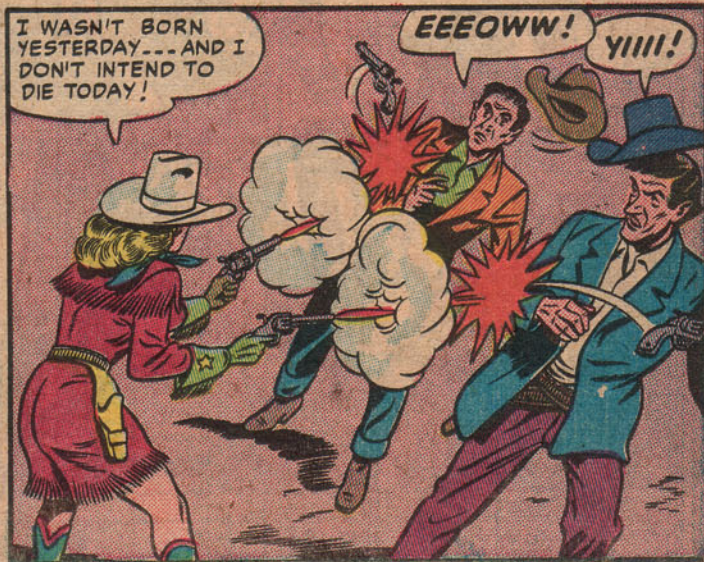
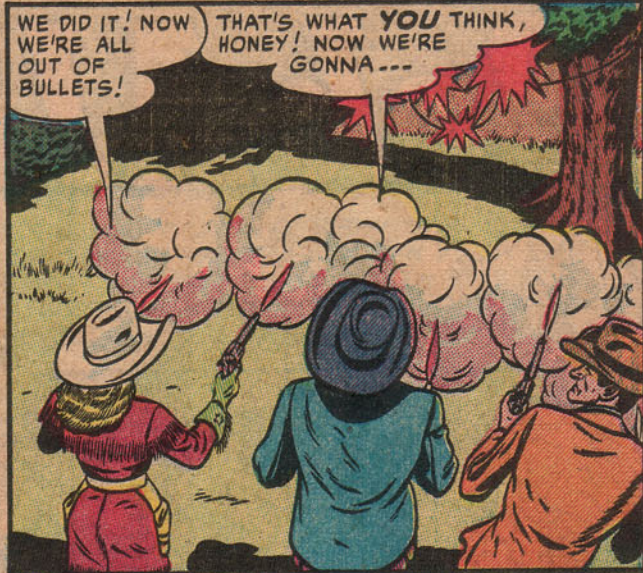
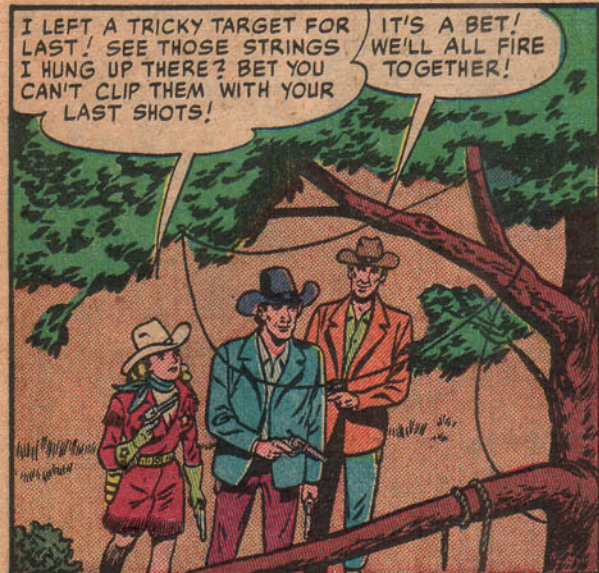
I WANNA SEE HER FACE WHEN WE PULL THESE HIDEOUT GUNS!











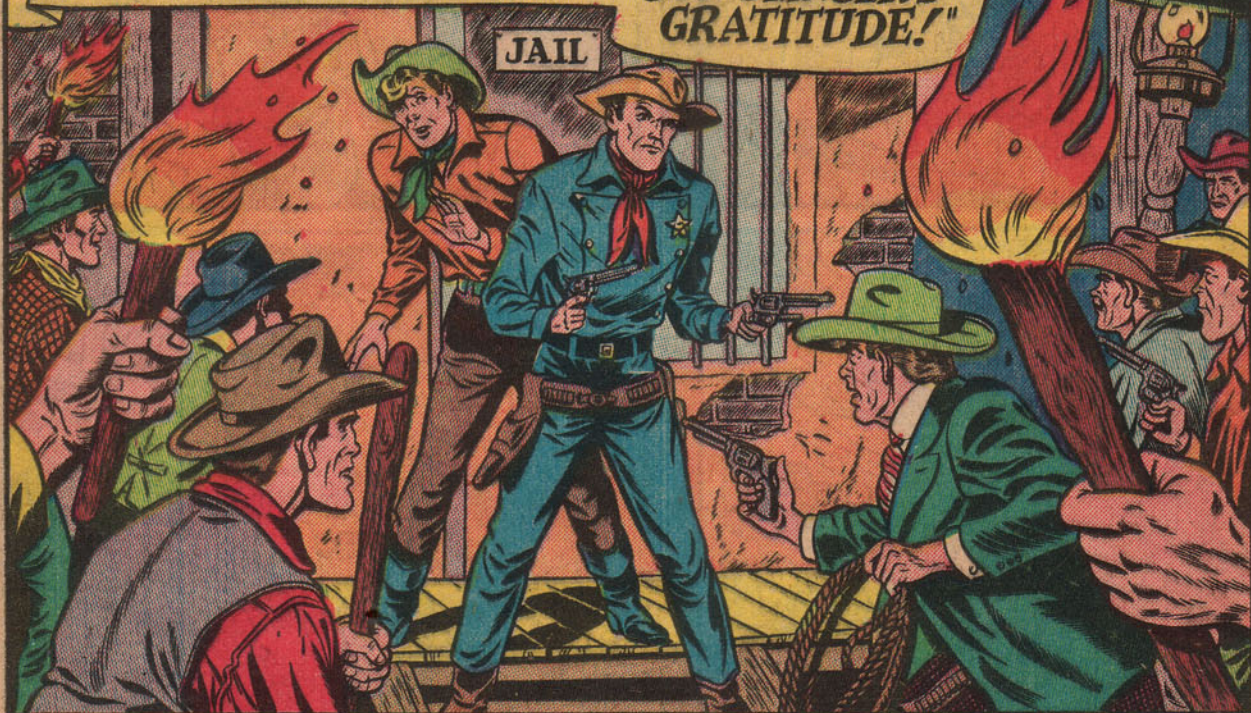


# Bob Allen

Frontier  
Marshal

IN A COUNTRY WHERE EVERYBODY GAMBLED, THEY SAID MARSHAL BOB ALLEN WAS NO GAMBLER! NEITHER THE CARDS NOR THE ROULETTE WHEELS COULD LURE HIM FROM HIS DUTY! BUT WHEN THE CHIPS WERE DOWN, THE FRONTIER MARSHAL WAS READY TO GAMBLE HIS LIFE ON A ---

**"GUN-SLINGER'S GRATTITUDE!"**



**BANKER SAM WESTLEY LIVES ONLY A FEW DOORS FROM HIS BANK!**

SAM! WHAT IS IT? WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP AT THIS HOUR?

I JUST SAW A LIGHT FLICKERING IN THE BANK! SOMEBODY'S BROKEN IN!



DON'T GO DOWN THERE, SAM WESTLEY! GET MARSHAL ALLEN!



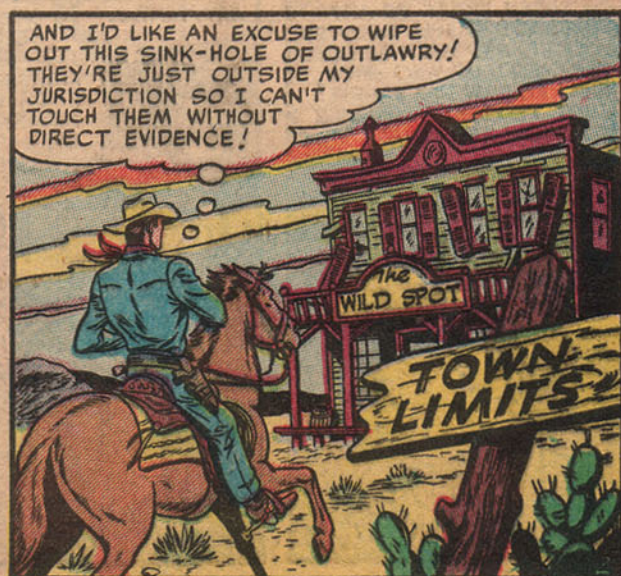
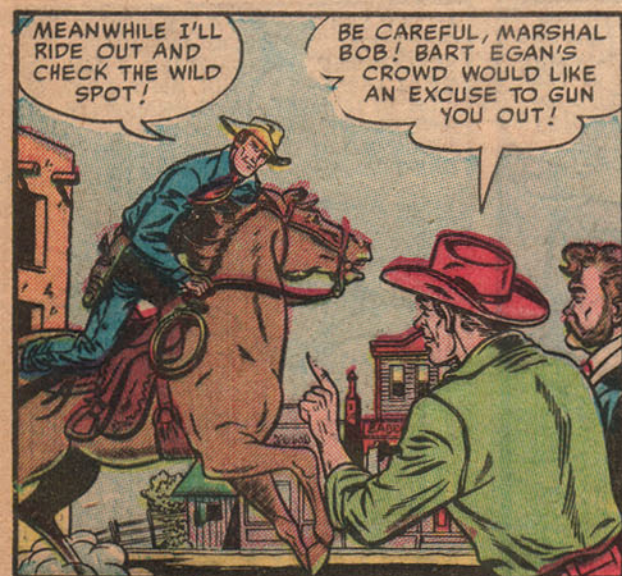
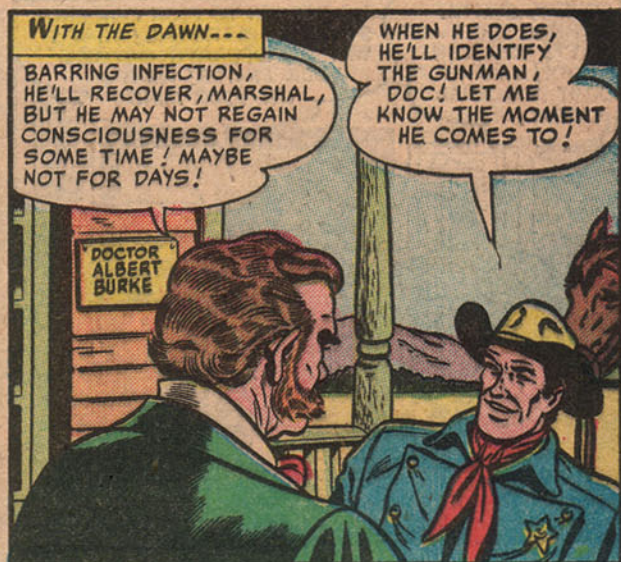
YOU RUN FOR THE MARSHAL, SARAH! I'M NOT LETTING ANY DIRTY BANDIT GET AWAY WITH THE TOWN'S MONEY!

HALT! STAND RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE OR I'LL SHOOT!

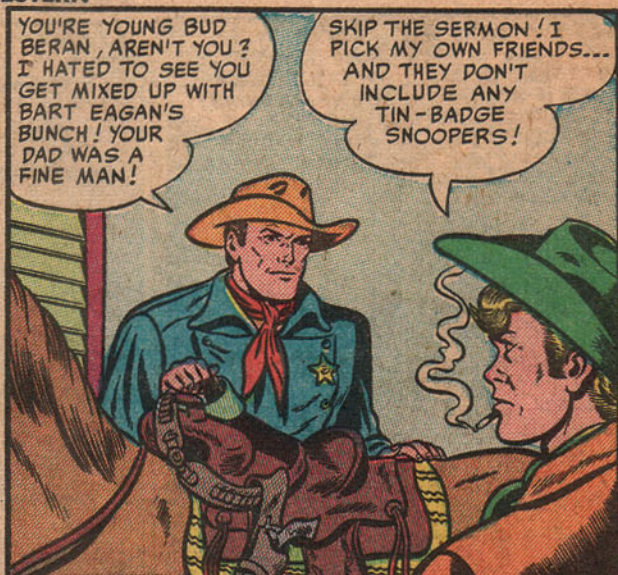
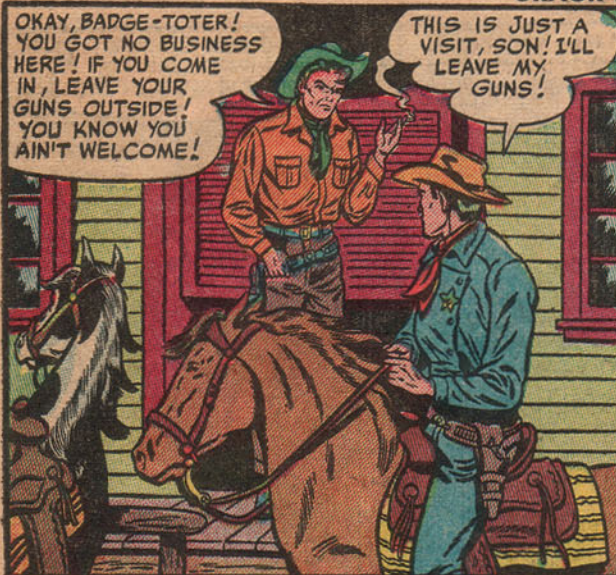




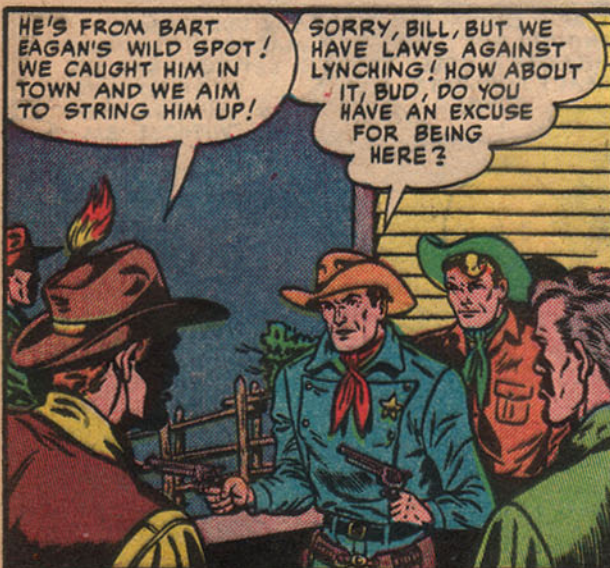
# CRACK WESTERN











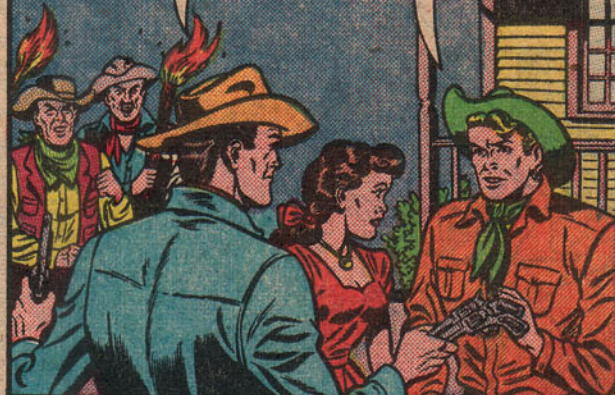
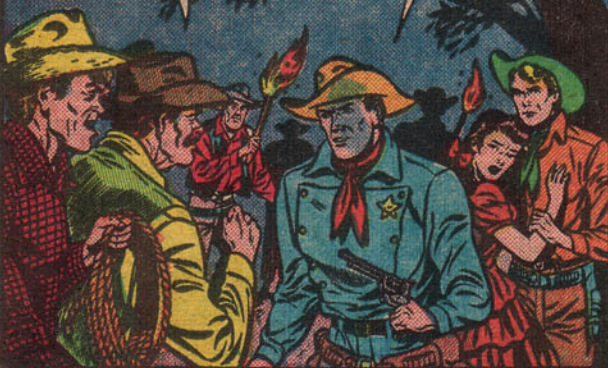


NOW STEP ASIDE, MARSHAL! YOU KNOW WHAT THE WILD BUNCH DID TO SAM! THEY'RE ALL THIEVES AND KILLERS AND DESERVE TO HANG!

I'LL AGREE, PETE--- WHEN THEY'VE BEEN CONVICTED ON LEGAL EVIDENCE! I'LL HANG ANY ONE OF THEM YOU HELP ME CONVICT LEGALLY!

I TAKE IT THEY'VE NOTHING AGAINST YOU, BUD! TAKE YOUR GUNS AND CLEAR OUT WHILE THEY'RE STILL UNCERTAIN!

YOU--- YOU'RE LETTING ME GO, MARSHAL? AFTER THE WAY I SHOT OFF MY MOUTH AT YOU? I WON'T FORGET THIS, ALLEN!



NOW LOOK HERE, MARSHAL! WE'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR---

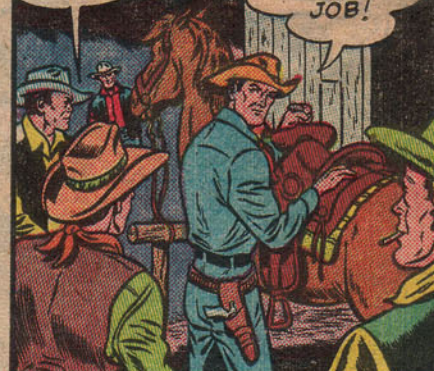
MARSHAL, COME QUICK! SAM'S CONSCIOUS AND WANTS TO TELL YOU WHO ROBBED THE BANK AND SHOT HIM!

IT WAS --- MATT EAGAN... SHOT ME! SAW HIM --- PLAIN AS --- DAY!

ALL RIGHT, SAM! TAKE IT EASY! I'LL GO PICK UP MATT AND LOCK HIM UP FOR TRIAL!

MARSHAL, YOU CAN'T GO AFTER MATT EAGAN ALONE! WE'LL GET UP A POSSE AND STORM THE WILD SPOT!

AND GET SOME GOOD MEN KILLED? NO, THANKS! YOU STAY HERE AND I'LL BRING MATT IN FOR TRIAL! THIS IS MY JOB!

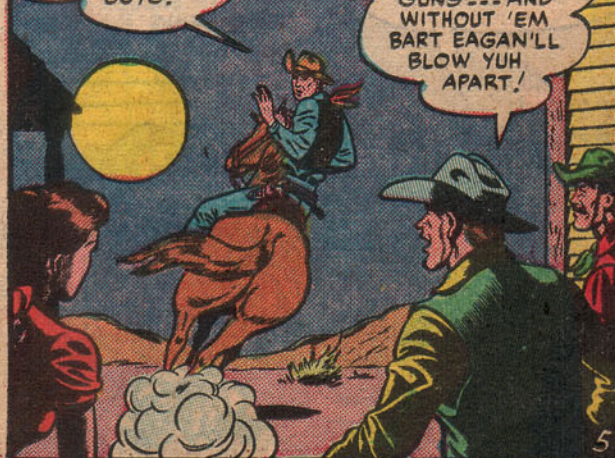
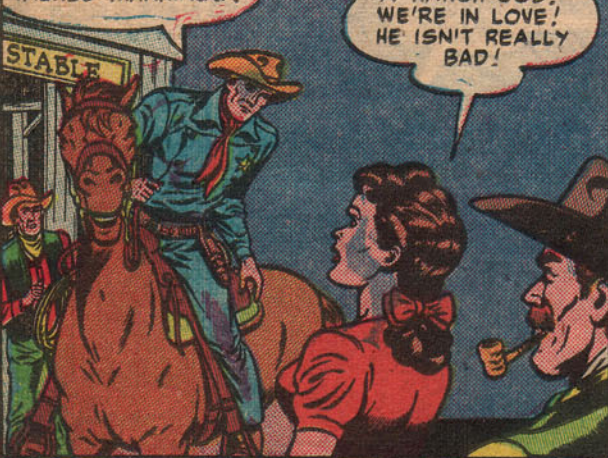


TELL ME ONE THING, SALLY--- IS BUD REALLY IN LOVE WITH YOU? HAS HE TALKED MARRIAGE?

OH, YES, MARSHAL! HE AIMS TO QUIT THE WILD BUNCH AND SETTLE DOWN TO A RANCH JOB! WE'RE IN LOVE! HE ISN'T REALLY BAD!

THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME! GET A CELL READY FOR MATT, BOYS!

YUH DURN FOOL, MARSHAL! THEY WON'T LET YUH NEAR THE SPOT WITH YORE GUNS --- AND WITHOUT 'EM BART EAGAN'LL BLOW YUH APART!





A FEW MINUTES LATER---

The  
WILD SPOT

OKAY,  
MARSHAL!  
AND WHERE  
DO YUH THINK  
YOU'RE GOING?

INSIDE FOR A TALK,  
AMIGO! I'M HANGING  
MY GUNS ON THE  
SADDLEHORN, SO  
STOP FEVERING  
AROUND  
ABOUT IT!

NOW LOOK, YOU!  
WE AIN'T TAKIN'---

QUIET! AND LET THOSE GUNS  
ALONE! BART EAGAN  
WOULDN'T LIKE A KILLING  
HE COULDN'T WIGGLE  
OUT OF!

WELL, LOOK  
WHO'S HERE!  
COME TO DO A  
LITTLE GAMBLING,  
MARSHAL?

AS A MATTER OF  
FACT, I DID, BART!  
I'VE COME TO  
ARREST YOUR  
BROTHER, MATT,  
FOR BANK ROBBERY  
AND ATTEMPTED  
MURDER!

ARE YOU  
JOKING?  
YOU, WITHOUT  
A GUN, GONNA  
ARREST MY  
BROTHER?

THAT'S RIGHT,  
BART! SAM  
WOKE UP AND  
NAMED MATT  
AS THE GUN-  
MAN WHO  
SHOT HIM DOWN!  
I'LL SEE THAT  
HE GETS A  
FAIR TRIAL!

HAW-HAW-  
HAW! IF THAT  
AIN'T RICH,  
BOYS! OUR  
UNARMED  
MARSHAL AIMS  
TO TAKE MATT  
IN FOR TRIAL!

HA, HA, BART!  
THAT'S THE  
BEST JOKE  
SINCE OLD  
ONE-ARM  
MIKE TRIED  
TO TAKE OVER  
YOUR BUNCH!

TOO BAD, MARSHAL,  
BUT YOU'RE IN A FIX!  
THE BOYS DON'T  
LIKE YUH AND YOU'RE  
IN HERE WITHOUT  
ANY LEGAL RIGHT!

I SEE, BART! YOU  
MEAN I CAN BE KILLED  
AND YOU CAN ALWAYS  
CLAIM I TRIED TO FORCE  
MY WAY IN WHERE I  
HAD NO RIGHT?

YUH CALLED IT, SNOOPER!  
WE BEEN ITCHIN' FOR A  
CHANCE TO WIPE YOU  
OUT AND THIS IS IT!  
SHALL I PLUG HIM  
NOW, BART?

WHY NOT? HE COME  
TO ARREST YOU SO I  
RECKON YOU GOT A  
RIGHT TO FIRST SHOT!  
LET HIM HAVE IT!



# CRACK WESTERN

SAY YORE PRAYERS,  
BADGE-BUZZARD! THIS  
IS YORE FINISH....!

**HOLD  
IT....!**

WHA...?  
YOU GONE  
OFF YOUR  
ROCKER,  
BUD?

NO! I JUST GOT ONTO IT,  
MATT! FUNNY, I GUESS  
I BEEN KINDA BLIND  
LATELY, NOT TO  
RECOGNIZE POLECATS  
WHEN I CHUMMED WITH 'EM!

NEVER MIND THE  
FOOL KID! PLUG  
THE MARSHAL....!

**MARSHAL!  
CATCH!**

NO YOU  
DON'T,  
BUZZARD!

THANKS,  
BUD!

**BANG!**

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST,  
MATT... AS I SAID  
BEFORE!

YOU'LL  
NEVER...  
**EEEOW!**

**POW!**

**POW!**

GO ON, MARSHAL! GET  
OUT WHILE YUH CAN! I'LL  
STAND THEM  
OFF!

WE'RE LEAVING  
TOGETHER, BUD!  
SALLY'S WAITING  
FOR YOU IN  
TOWN!

**BANG!**

YOU AIN'T TAKIN'  
ME IN!

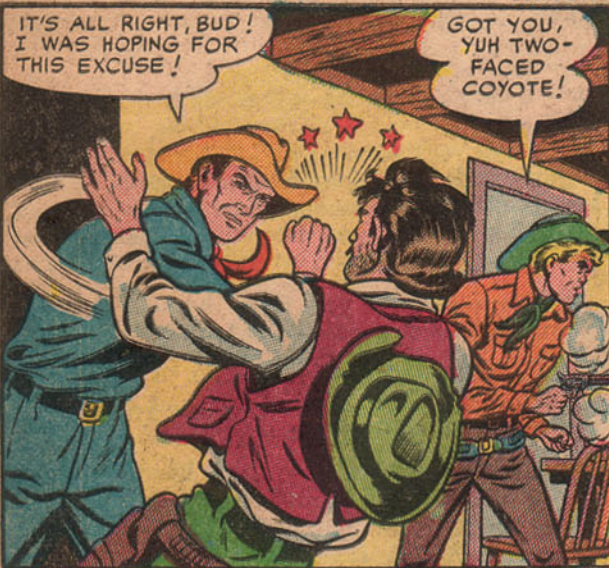
HEY...!  
LOOK  
OUT!



# CRACK WESTERN

IT'S ALL RIGHT, BUD!  
I WAS HOPING FOR  
THIS EXCUSE!

GOT YOU,  
YUH TWO-  
FACED  
COYOTE!



LET'S MAKE THIS A  
CLEAN SWEEP, BUD...  
SO NO MORE YOUNG  
FELLOWS GET LED  
INTO WRONG PATHS!



YOU DID IT, MARSHAL! THAT'LL  
BE THE END OF BART EAGAN  
AND HIS BUNCH! WITH  
MATT EAGAN IN JAIL,  
HIS POWER IS GONE!

AND  
YOU'RE  
FREE TO START A  
NEW LIFE WITH  
SALLY, BUD!



YUH GOT MATT  
EAGAN... AND  
THAT GUN-SLICK  
KID, TOO!

LAY OFF BUD  
BERAN! WITHOUT  
HIM I'D BE DEAD  
NOW AND BART  
EAGAN WOULD  
BE TELLING YOU  
ALL WHERE TO  
GET OFF!



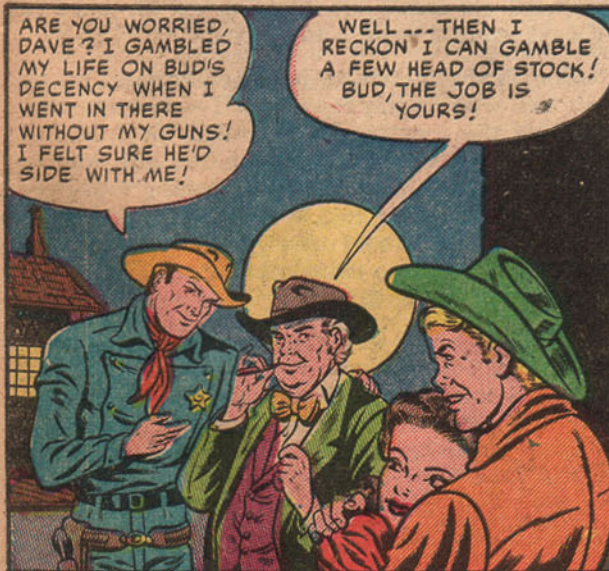
DAVE, YOU'VE  
BEEN WANTING  
A BRIGHT YOUNG  
FELLOW TO  
WORK YOUR  
EAST VALLEY  
RANCH! HOW  
ABOUT YOUNG  
BUD HERE?

BUD? WELL  
... AH...  
HARRUMPH!  
WOULDN'T  
THAT BE A  
KIND OF A  
GAMBLE,  
MARSHAL?  
AFTER ALL...



ARE YOU WORRIED,  
DAVE? I GAMBLER  
MY LIFE ON BUD'S  
DECENCY WHEN I  
WENT IN THERE  
WITHOUT MY GUNS!  
I FELT SURE HE'D  
SIDE WITH ME!

WELL... THEN I  
RECKON I CAN GAMBLE  
A FEW HEAD OF STOCK!  
BUD, THE JOB IS  
YOURS!



MARSHAL, I'M  
GLAD YOU DON'T  
DROP IN TO GAMBLE  
AT MY DEUCE-TRAY  
SALOON! WITH YOUR  
LUCK YOU'D BREAK  
ME IN A WEEK!

I'LL TELL YOU A SECRET,  
JACK... WHEN YOU GAMBLE  
ON HUMAN DECENCY  
YOU'RE USUALLY  
GAMBLING ON A  
SURE THING! I  
NEVER LOSE!





# Cactus Pete's Gold

**T**HE sun was setting over the mountains as Tex Larson rode into Canyon Creek, and the gold and purple sky added warmth to the countryside. A flush of warmth and inner satisfaction rushed through him, too!

"This may be the end of a long trail of wandering," he thought. "I hope so!"

Canyon Creek was a small cow town and its wide street generally was empty except for a few pintos or buckskins tied to the hitching posts. But, this day, it was buzzing with activity. Tex noticed the covered wagons, stage coaches, and buckboards. He saw that there were dozens of ponies and plenty of people, including cowhands and Indians and pretty girls dressed in their best. He glanced upward, to the canvas banner that bridged the street. It read:

CARSON'S RODEO July 12-19

"Carson's Rodeo. That's for me!" thought Tex. "All my life, I've wanted to be in a rodeo!"

He had been in this part of the country before, working as a ranch hand, but he was a mover—couldn't stay long in one place. This time, he had come up from Texas riding the bag-line, stopping from ranch to ranch and living on Western hospitality. It was lucky that he had hit the Double Z ranch the night before and met Jim Powers. Jim had offered him a job with the rodeo. Now he could keep on the move and still belong to something. It was a good feeling.

Tex reined in his white mustang in front of the Four Deuces Bar and jumped from the saddle.

"Easy, Buck," he said, giving the horse a gentle pat. "You wait here while I check in with Powers. Make out right and we'll be sure of a good feed-bag from now on."

He looped the reins to the wrack and sauntered through the swinging doors into the saloon. It was filled. The bar was lined with cowpokes, most of them doubtless with the rodeo. Men sat at the tables, some playing cards and others drinking and watching. Obviously, they were not all Westerners, but a rodeo always attracted a motley crowd. A player piano was pouring out a discordant tune from someplace in back. Tex couldn't see through the heavy haze of smoke.

"Stuffy," he thought. "Better not let it get me or they'll think I'm a tenderfoot."

Just inside, a big knobby-faced man with high leather boots and jangling spurs pushed his way through the crowd and extended a huge gnarled but friendly hand to Tex. It was Jim Powers.

"Been lookin' for you, fella," he said heartily. "Come and meet some of the boys."

He ushered Tex down the line. "This is Spud Diehl . . . and Sam Benson . . . and Sagebrush Dugan . . . and——"

It went on and on. Tex shook hands until his fingers ached. "Glad ta meetcha," they said. And, "Hear you're joinin' up." And, "From Texas, huh? I'd shore like ta roam that old Texas range again."

Tex liked them. "Good hombres," he thought. "All kinda like a family—something I never had."

Jim motioned toward the end of the bar. "One more you gotta meet," he told Tex, "an' that's old Cactus Pete. A real old-timer and the best raw-hide of the lot."

Cactus Pete leaned heavily on the bar, his back bent with the weight of years and his long gray hair and grizzly beard almost covering his face.

"Hey, Cactus Pete," said Powers, nudging the old man on the shoulder, "meet the new man, Tex Larson."

"New man, huh? Howdy, lad. Glad ta know ya. Ya shore hitched up with a good bunch o' boys here! Ain't never been no better."

"I'm sure of that," said Tex with a grin, as he took the old man's hand. "I like 'em all and I've always wanted to go with a rodeo."

Somebody motioned for Jim Powers, so he left Tex with Cactus Pete. And Tex knew he was meeting the acid test, for through the frame of wrinkles and the shaggy brows, the old fellow's eyes were fixed upon him and looking him over as carefully as if he had been appraising a horse. Tex had begun to feel uneasy when the eyes narrowed and began to twinkle and Cactus Pete patted him on the back.

"I like you," he said. "Now, about this rodeo—I been with it nigh onto twenty years. Fore that, I was a scout an' a fair t'middlin' rider, if I do say it m'self. I don't ride no more—too old—but I gotta go along now ta take care o' my boys. Gotta look after 'em. See?"

"Sure, I see." Tex nodded. "That's swell!"



"Yep, gotta watch over 'em," Cactus Pete repeated. "Gotta see they make out. Me—I aint got no worries."

He looked about him and then pulled a small bag from his hip pocket. He put a bony finger to his withered lips to indicate that he was letting Tex in on a deep secret—then he dumped the contents of the bag on the bar. Tex stared.

"Know what them are, boy? Huh? Ever see things like them afore?"

"Nuggets," answered Tex. "Gold nuggets! I never saw any that big!"

"Biggest nuggets ya ever saw, ain't they? Come from my mine up in Montana. Here's a map," and he pulled a roll of paper from his other hip pocket. "Here's a map, showin' how ta get ta my mine. Lots o' nuggets there, boy, bigger'n these. Some day I'm goin' back and dig fer 'em."

The men at the bar paid little attention as Cactus Pete told Tex his story. Maybe one or two watched and smiled. But at a table in back, two men drank and stared.

"Hey, Duke," said one, "did you hear that? Think it's on the level?"

"You saw the nuggets, didn't you, Rocky? See how they sparkled? It's not clay."

"Duke, are you thinkin' what I am? We gotta hide out from the law. Any better place than in the mountains of Montana?"

"Can't name it. While the cops cool off back East, we can be diggin' gold in the West. Not bad."

Jim Powers ordered the rodeo riders to break up and hit the hay early since they had to be in top shape for the opening day. He left, too, but not before he had told Tex where to bed down his horse and find a bunk for himself. Old Cactus Pete hobbled down the street alone. The others had learned, long before, to let him take his time!

Tex had untied Buck's reins and was about to hop into the saddle when he heard a wail from the shadows beyond. It was followed by a string of curses, such as only an old sourdough like Cactus Pete could have known. Still holding the reins, Tex ran down the street and found the old man, shaking his fist and bellowing like an injured animal.

"My gold! Two consarned critters took my map and my gold!"

"Don't worry, pappy," shouted Tex, as he flung himself across the saddle. "I'll get 'em back for you if it takes a year!"

Galloping around the corner, Tex saw two figures running away in the darkness. He called for them to stop but the only answer was the whine of a bullet that barely missed his hat. He leaped to the ground and began the chase.

"Anybody'd have to be rotten clear through," he thought, "to steal from that old man."

Another bullet came close and cut the air beside him. Tex was quick on the trigger and he was close enough now to see his target. A shot rang out, then a piercing cry, and he saw that he had disarmed one of his opponents. He flung himself at the other, grabbing him around the knees and tossing him into the air so that the aim of the .45 went wild. Tex grabbed the Colt and threw it as far as he could.

The battle that followed was a slug-fest. Tex fought both men, his fists fast and his punches well planted. The commotion was attracting a crowd but, by the time the sheriff and Jim Powers and the rodeo wranglers got there, the culprits had been well beaten and had given up to the tall cowboy who seemed to have eyes in the back of his head and a dozen arms that whirled like windmills. Tex took the map and the gold. And the sheriff took Duke and Rocky, the two fugitives from justice, into custody.

There were tears of gratitude in old Cactus Pete's eyes, as he fondled his precious possessions. "Bless ya, boy," he said, and sniffed and walked away.

Big Jim Powers took Tex aside and laid the hard, calloused hand on his shoulder. "I'm sorry about this," he explained. "Too bad you went to all that trouble for nothin'."

Tex looked puzzled. "What do you mean?"

"Well," Jim explained, "you see, we bring Cactus Pete along just to look after him! The old gent looked for gold all his life and never found it, so last summer some of the boys cooked up a scheme!"

"Scheme?" Tex still didn't understand.

"Planted phony nuggets around," Jim continued, "—fool's gold! He thought he'd struck pay dirt! Says he's goin' back to open that mine but we know he'll never make it." The big man was silent a minute, then he added, "So you risked your life for nothin'!"

"It wasn't for nothing," Tex answered, "if that's what keeps him happy."

Jim Powers gave him a pat on the back. Tex knew, then, that he was "in." He had found a place in life, at last. He had come to the end of the lonely trail.



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# Arizona Raines



AS ARIZONA RAINES AND HIS PARTNER, SPURS, RIDE INTO THE TOWN OF LOS PADRES!

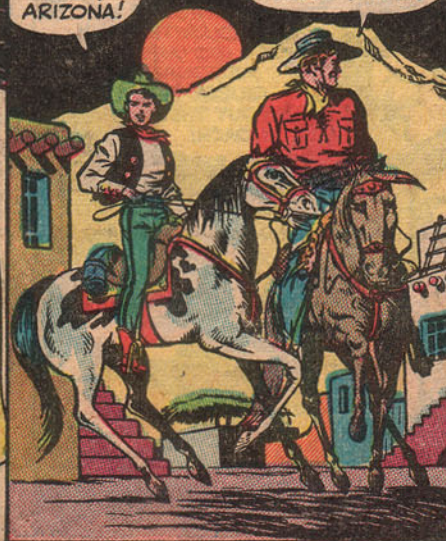
EVERY HOMBRE IN TOWN KNEW WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THE LOS PADRES STAGE! AMBUSHED BY SCALP-HUNGRY INDIANS...AND NO ONE LEFT TO TELL ITS TALE OF HORROR!

BUT ARIZONA RAINES WANTED TO KNOW WHY THE LOS PADRES STAGE STILL ROLLED INTO TOWN, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, WITH ITS GHOSTLY WHEELS CLATTERING, AND WITH ITS MURDERED OCCUPANTS STILL PEERING FROM THE WINDOWS OF

THE  
**PHANTOM  
STAGECOACH!**

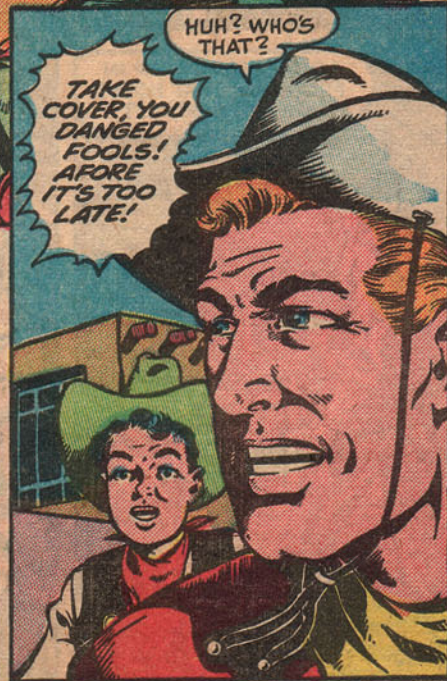
SHORE IS MIGHTY QUIET, ARIZONA!

RECKON PEOPLE GRAB THEIR SHUTEYE EARLY IN THESE PARTS!



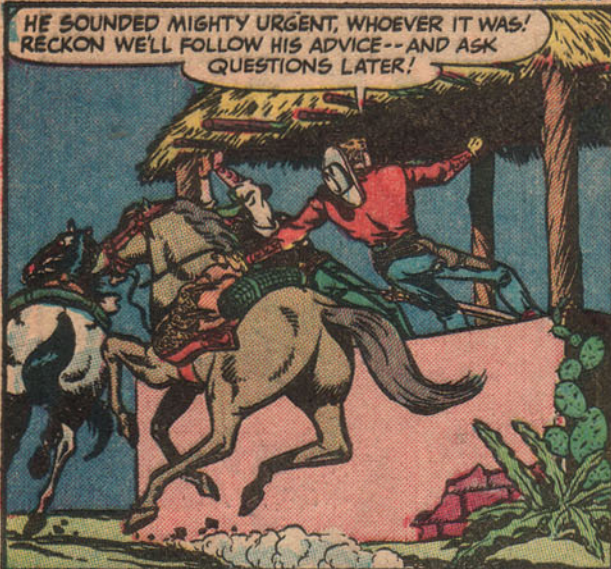
HUH? WHO'S THAT?

TAKE COVER, YOU DANGED FOOLS! AFORE IT'S TOO LATE!





HE SOUNDED MIGHTY URGENT, WHOEVER IT WAS!  
RECKON WE'LL FOLLOW HIS ADVICE--AND ASK  
QUESTIONS LATER!



I DON'T LIKE HIDIN' FROM  
NOTHIN' AT ALL!  
WHY SHOULD...?



QUIET, SPURS! I  
HEAR THE SOUND  
OF WHEELS!

IT'S A  
STAGECOACH!

WAL  
BUST MAH  
BRITCHES!!



SHORE IS ALL-  
FIRED PECULIAR  
LOOKIN'! NEVER  
SAW A STAGE  
ALL DONE UP  
IN WHITE  
THATAWAY!

WHY IS IT  
RIDING INTO  
TOWN AT  
THIS HOUR?



LOOK! IT STOPPED IN  
FRONT OF THAT HOUSE  
DOWN THE STREET!

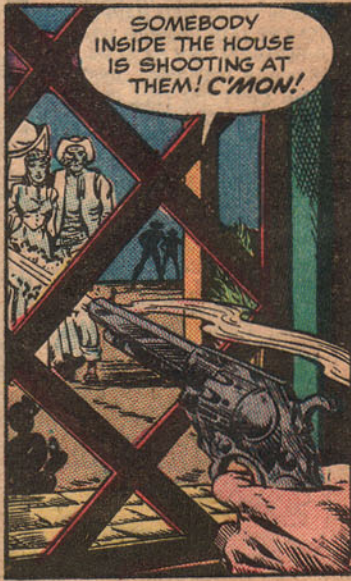


THE DRIVER GOT DOWN! HE'S  
OPENING THE STAGE DOOR  
FOR SOMEBODY TO GET  
OUT!

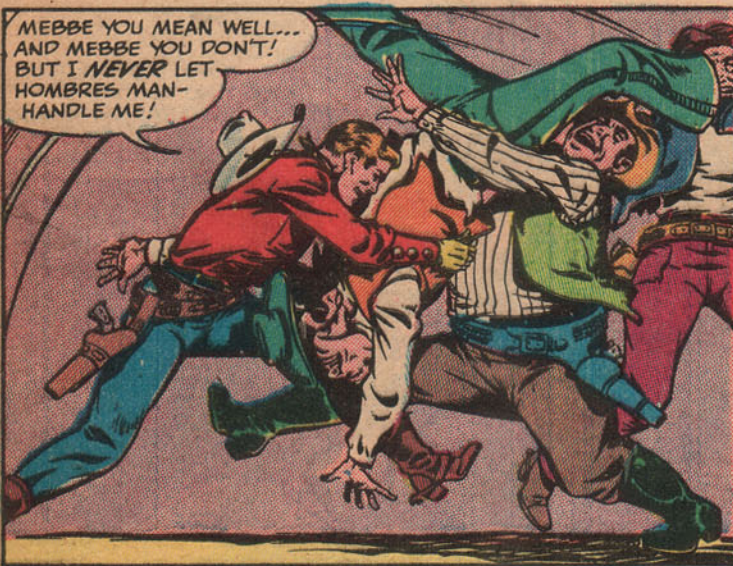
MEBBE WE  
OUGHTN'T TUH  
GO ANY CLOSER,  
ARIZONA! I GOT A  
QUEER FEELING  
ABOUT THET  
COACH!



SOMEBODY  
INSIDE THE HOUSE  
IS SHOOTING AT  
THEM! C'MON!









YUH CAN'T HURT GHOSTS WITH BULLETS!

THAT'S LOCO TALK! I FIRED THOSE SHOTS AND I'M SHORE I WINGED ONE OF THE VARMINTS! THAT PROVES THEY AIN'T GHOSTS RIDING THAT STAGECOACH!



MY NAME'S KEM RANDALL, AND I OWN THE STAGE-COACH LINE! THAT PHANTOM STAGE IS JUST SOME ORNERY TRICK TUH RUN ME OUT OF BUSINESS! AND I'LL PAY A HANDSOME REWARD TO THE FUST HOMBRE WHO PROVES I'M RIGHT!

RECKON WE'LL TAKE THAT JOB, MR. RANDALL!



SOON...

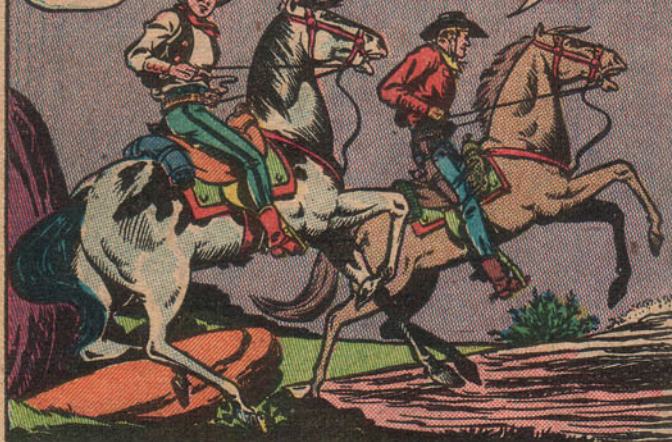
IF RANDALL IS SO DOGGONE SHORE WE AIN'T CHASIN' GHOSTS, WHY DOESN'T HE HUNT FER THEM HIMSELF?

HE'S A BADLY SCARED HOMBRE! THE WAY HE OPENED FIRE ON THET STAGECOACH PROVES HE'S ON THE POINT OF CRACKIN' UP!



MEBBE WE ARE TRAILIN' GHOSTS, ARIZONA! THE MARK OF STAGECOACH WHEELS ENDS HERE!

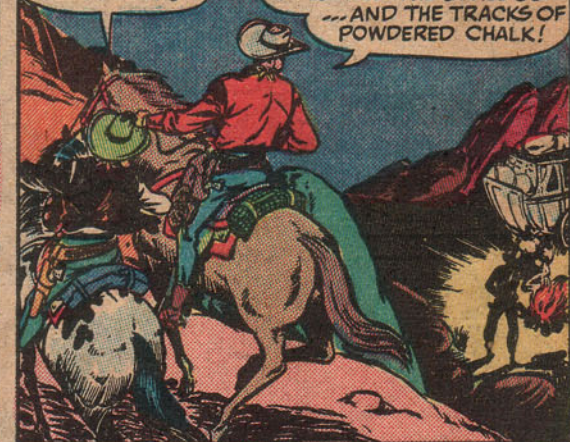
I'M MORE INTERESTED IN THIS POWDERED CHALK! IT PROVES WE'RE **NOT** RIDING A PHANTOM'S TRAIL!



MOMENTS LATER...

YORE RIGHT, ARIZONA! THAR'S THE PHANTOM STAGE! BUT HOW'D YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND IT?

THEY RODE OVER HARD SHALE TO MAKE SHORE THEY LEFT NO TRACKS! I JUST FOLLOWED THE SHALE BED --- AND THE TRACKS OF POWDERED CHALK!



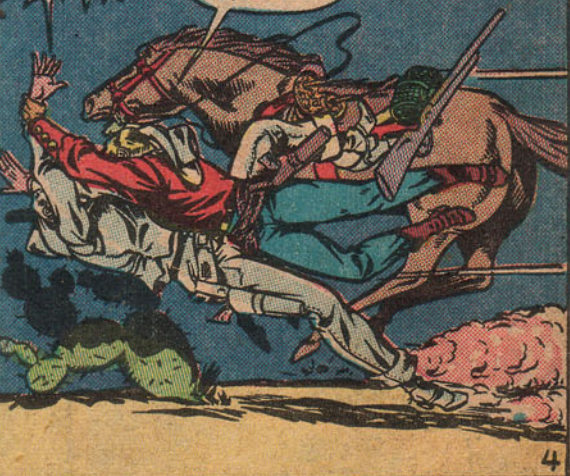
YOU SEE, SPURS? THEY COVERED THEMSELVES AND THE STAGE WITH POWDERED CHALK TO MAKE THEM LOOK LIKE GHOSTS!

SOME VARMINTS HAVE FOUND US! I'LL BLAST...



EEEOW!

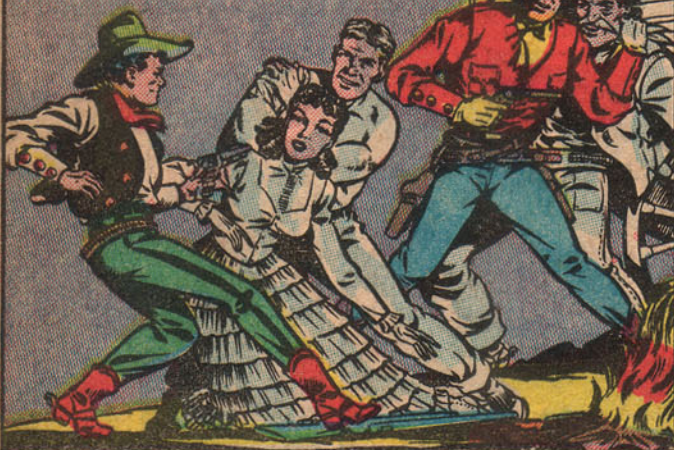
I DON'T LIKE TO SETTLE MATTERS WITH GUNS! THIS WAY IS SO MUCH EASIER!





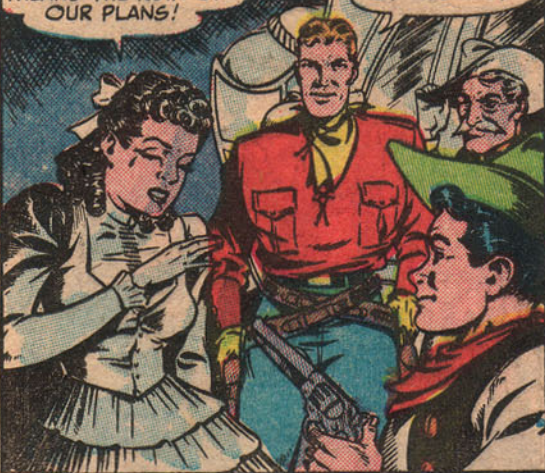
NOW, MA'AM, DON'T GO GUN-LOCO!

THANKS, SPURS! SHE'S DESPERATE ENOUGH TO USE THAT GUN!



I-I WOULDN'T HAVE SHOT YOU! I **COULDN'T** KILL ANYONE--EVEN IF IT MEANS THE RUIN OF OUR PLANS!

I BELIEVE YOU, MISS! BUT SUPPOSE YOU TELL ME THE MEANING OF ALL THIS!



MY NAME IS LUCY MONTAIN! I-I WAS ABOARD THE LOS PADRES STAGE WHEN IT WAS AMBUSHED BY INDIANS! THEY KILLED THE DRIVER AND MY BROTHER, BUT FOR SOME REASON THEY SPARED MY LIFE!

RECKON SOME INDIAN CHIEF TOOK A FANCY TO YOU!



THEY KEPT ME PRISONER IN THEIR VILLAGE FOR A WEEK! THERE I LEARNED THAT THE RAID HAD BEEN PLANNED BY KEM RANDALL HIMSELF! HE SPLITS THE LOOT WITH THE INDIANS...AND COLLECTS IN FULL FROM THE INSURANCE COMPANIES!



WHY, THE LOW DOWN MURDERIN' RATTLE-SNAKE!

FINALLY, I MANAGED TO ESCAPE! BUT I STILL COULDN'T PROVE KEM RANDALL WAS THE VARMINT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INDIAN RAID THAT HAD KILLED MY BROTHER!



SO I HIT ON THIS SCHEME TO FRIGHTEN HIM INTO A CONFESSION! I HAD A STAGECOACH BUILT TO RESEMBLE THE LOS PADRES STAGE... AND PERSUADED TWO FRIENDS TO PLAY THE PARTS OF THE TWO MURDERED MEN!



EVERY NIGHT WE RODE INTO TOWN AND STOPPED IN FRONT OF KEM RANDALL'S HOUSE! WHEN HE STARTED SHOOTING TONIGHT, I WAS SURE HE WAS READY TO CRACK...

RECKON YOU WEREN'T FAR WRONG! ONE OF YOUR FRIENDS GOT WOUNDED IN THE FRACAS... BUT I'VE ALWAYS HANKERED TO BE AN ACTOR MYSELF!





The following evening...



YOU-YOU MEAN YOU WANT TO HELP ME?

THAT'S RIGHT, MISS! AND THIS TIME WE'RE GONNA **PROVE** TO KEM RANDALL THAT HE'S DEALIN' WITH GHOSTS!



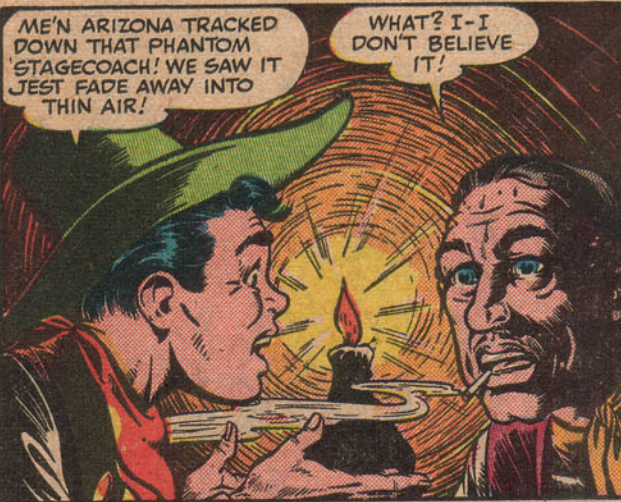
THAT PHANTOM STAGECOACH WON'T COME BACK TONIGHT! I FOUND OUT THE NAME OF THAT BIG COWPOKE WHO WENT AFTER IT! HE'S ARIZONA RAINES...



HE'S GOT A REP AS THE BEST GUN-WADDY IN THE WEST! THAR AIN'T NO GHOSTS COULD FRIGHTEN HIM...

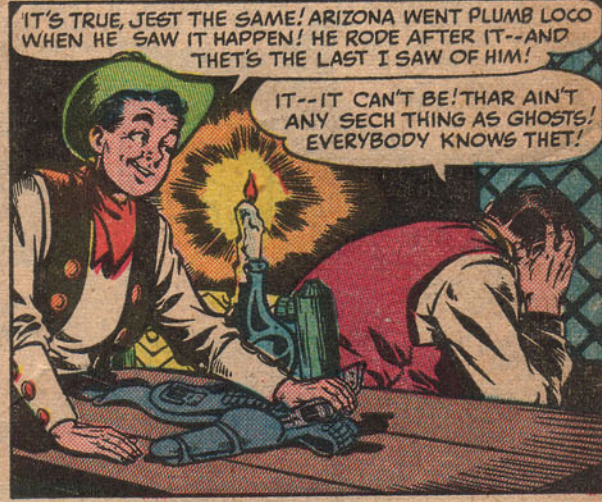
SULP! WHO'S THAR?

IT'S ME! RECKON I'VE GOT BAD NEWS FER YUH!



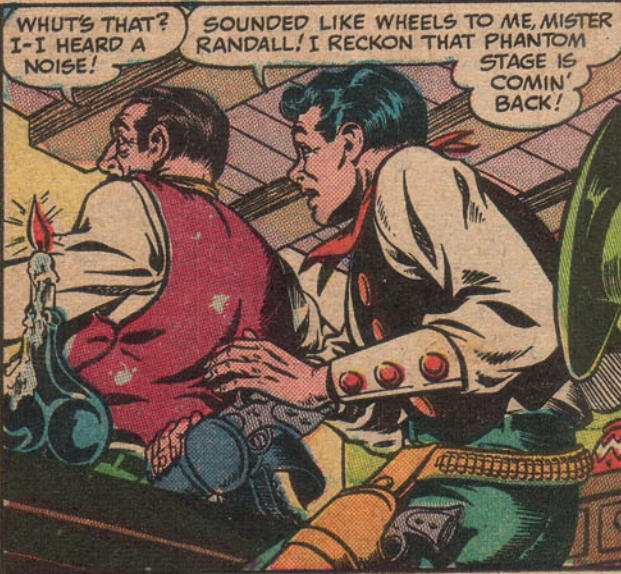
ME'N ARIZONA TRACKED DOWN THAT PHANTOM STAGECOACH! WE SAW IT JUST FADE AWAY INTO THIN AIR!

WHAT? I-I DON'T BELIEVE IT!



IT'S TRUE, JEST THE SAME! ARIZONA WENT PLUMB LOGO WHEN HE SAW IT HAPPEN! HE RODE AFTER IT--AND THET'S THE LAST I SAW OF HIM!

IT--IT CAN'T BE! THAR AIN'T ANY SECH THING AS GHOSTS! EVERYBODY KNOWS THET!



WHUT'S THAT? I-I HEARD A NOISE!

SOUNDED LIKE WHEELS TO ME, MISTER RANDALL! I RECKON THAT PHANTOM STAGE IS COMIN' BACK!



THIS TIME IT MAY BE COMIN' TUH GET YOU!

IT--IT'S A FAKE! IT'S GOT TO BE! A COUPLE OF LEAD BULLETS WILL PUT AN END TO ALL THIS JABBER ABOUT PHANTOMS!